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'Best guess at what could be acceptable'

Deadlock broken as Ulster peace plan is proposed

By MARTIN FLETCHER, CHIEF IRELAND CORRESPONDENT

THE British and Irish Governments broke the deadlock in the Northern Ireland peace process last night by agreeing the outline of a bold new settlement which they described as their "best guess at what could be a generally acceptable outcome".

The draft was greeted with varying degrees of enthusiasm by the main parties, which had gathered at Stormont to resume peace talks after a recess punctuated by violence. They were studying the proposals overnight and will discuss them this afternoon. Crucially, none of them rejected them.

The blueprint they will consider today would sweep away the Anglo-Irish Agreement of 1985 and the Framework Documents of 1995, and instead introduce a new set of institutional structures redefining Northern Ireland's relationships within the British Isles.

The nine-paragraph document envisages a new Northern Ireland assembly to be elected by proportional representation; a new council attended by the British and Irish governments and representatives of the new Scottish, Welsh and Northern Irish assemblies; and a "north-south ministerial council" to promote co-operation between Northern Ireland and the Irish Republic.

It also proposes "balanced constitutional change", meaning that Dublin would drop its



Hume (left) and Trimble welcomed settlement blueprint

territorial claim to Northern Ireland and London would legislate to acknowledge the possibility of a united Ireland if a majority in the north supported that. It advocates a Bill of Rights and other measures to ensure equality, and steps to promote a peaceful society acceptable to both communities by dealing with issues like prisoners, security and disarmament.

The document was finalised during three days of diplomatic activity led by the Prime Minister in a determined attempt to counter the renewed violence of the last fortnight with real political progress. Tony Blair has used the full weight of his office to try to secure agreement, having spoken at least six times to Bertie Ahern, the Taoiseach, as well as to the party leaders including Gerry Adams of Sinn Féin. He devoted all his spare time in Tokyo to Northern Ireland and was on the telephone until 3.30am, yesterday trying to secure agreement.

Mo Mowlam, the Northern

Ireland Secretary with whom the Prime Minister has been in constant touch, said: "This breakthrough offers a new basis for discussion that both governments hope will enable progress". David Andrews, the Irish Foreign Minister, called it "a road map to a new agreement" that would inject an urgently-needed new dynamic into the talks.

For David Trimble, the Ulster Unionist Party leader, the outline is much more acceptable than the Framework Documents. His party has been pressing hard for the so-called Council of the British Isles because it would reinforce Northern Ireland's links to the United Kingdom and dilute a north-south council that Unionists see as an embryonic all-Ireland government.

Mr Trimble said last night that the document showed the north-south council would clearly come under the "umbrella" of the Council of the British Isles. It would be strictly accountable to the new

Northern Ireland Assembly and there was no suggestion that it would have executive functions. "There's nothing in this paper that obstructs or contradicts the sort of outcome for which we are working," he said.

The Social Democratic and Labour Party leader John Hume also welcomed the document as "addressing the central issues and relationships that go to the heart of our problems". But his party had a quite different interpretation from the Unionists. It emphasised a line in the covering statement from the two Governments saying the two councils would "operate independently in their designated areas of responsibility", and insisted that nationalists would accept no arrangement that suggested the north-south council was less important than the Council of the British Isles.

The SDLP also argued that the outline envisaged executive powers for the north-south council because it talked of bringing together "those with executive powers" in Belfast and Dublin, and of "suitable implementation bodies".

Sinn Féin offered the coolest response, suggesting the Government had succumbed to Unionist and loyalist pressure over the past two weeks and diluted the Framework Documents. Sinn Féin cannot explicitly endorse the idea of a Northern Ireland assembly without accepting the principle of partition, but promised no "kneejerk reaction".

Statement text, page 2



Lady Sarah McCorquodale joins Gordon Brown in considering what would be the best memorial to her sister

Memorial garden idea takes root

By JAMES LANDALE

THE idea of a special garden at Kensington Palace to commemorate Diana, Princess of Wales, has found favour with the committee considering a permanent memorial to her, and it is now considering detailed plans.

Gordon Brown, whose committee met for the first time at 11 Downing Street yesterday,

said that members also liked the idea of a "Diana medal" for young people involved in community services and that a number of ways of launching such an award were being investigated.

With the Princess's sister Lady Sarah McCorquodale at his side, the Chancellor added that almost 10,000 suggestions had been put forward by people from all walks of life

schoolchildren, pensioners, voluntary organisations, local authorities, architects and professional bodies.

"All have been touched in some way by Diana's zest for life and her qualities of compassion and care for others. The fitting and imaginative ideas which they have put forward will guide the discussions of the committee. These will seek not just to identify a

permanent memorial, but to develop ideas which will continue the work which she started." The charities with which the Princess was most closely involved would be kept informed of the committee's decisions, as would the main political parties.

The committee, which will meet again next month, hopes Continued on page 2, col 1

Blair welcomes Japanese apology

The whole Japanese Government has apologised for the sufferings of British prisoners in the Second World War, during a meeting between Ryutaro Hashimoto, the Prime Minister, and Tony Blair, who described it as "a very significant step forward". Page 75

Full Monty story

Field Marshal Montgomery, victor of El Alamein, brought back to England a grey stallion he captured from Rommel to be stabled at Windsor Castle, government papers disclosed. Page 4

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Cook told to travel alone on US and Far East tour

By NICHOLAS WATT, POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

ROBIN COOK was forced last night to abandon plans to take his new partner on an official ten-day world tour later this week amid fears that the trip would be overshadowed by his marital situation.

Downing Street announced that the Foreign Secretary would travel to Washington and Ottawa without Gaynor Regan, the woman for whom he ended his 28-year marriage. The Foreign Office announced later that Mr Cook would also not take Mrs Regan, 41, his Commons secretary, on the second leg of his tour to Hong Kong and China next week.

The announcement from Downing Street fuelled speculation that Tony Blair had intervened from Tokyo to block the Foreign Secretary from taking Mrs Regan on his world tour. Mr Blair is said to have been irritated that his own visit to Japan has been

overshadowed by Mr Cook's marital situation and Downing Street is determined that Mr Cook's high-profile visit should not suffer the same fate. A Downing Street spokesman denied last night that the Prime Minister had personally intervened, although the spokesman did say that Downing Street does have to approve overseas visits by ministers.

The announcement appeared to contradict indications over the weekend from sources close to Mr Cook that he would take Mrs Regan on his tour to discuss Britain's presidency of the European Union. The Foreign Office indicated again last night that Mr Cook had intended to take Mrs Regan to the Far East, although a spokesman said that he had always intended to travel alone to North America.

As Mr Cook made final preparations for his tour yesterday he decided to travel without his partner for the whole trip because of fears that her presence would turn the trip into a media circus.

Mr Cook and his future wife had first-hand experience of the intense interest in their relationship on Sunday when they were greeted by a large crowd of reporters and television crews when they flew into Edinburgh airport. Mrs Regan, who is said to be unmarried by the media's interest, looked grim-faced as Mr Cook announced that they would marry as soon as he is divorced from Margaret, his wife of 28 years.

Mr Cook, 51, decided to separate from his wife in August within minutes of being told by Downing Street Continued on page 2, col 1

Peter Riddell, page 10
Proper wife, page 17
Libby Purves, page 18

Wall Street calm as Hong Kong panics

By JANET BUSH, ECONOMICS EDITOR

THE collapse of one of Asia's most successful investment banking firms yesterday sent Hong Kong shares into a tailspin but investors in Britain and America reacted with composure.

Talks at the weekend failed to find new cash to save Peregrine and the firm severed

day applied for liquidation. The news resulted in the sixth largest points drop in Hong Kong's Hang Seng index since 1970. The index closed 773.58 points lower, a drop of nearly nine per cent, to close at 8,121.06, the lowest level since March, 1995.

The rout sent shivers through the London market, which dropped sharply in the first minutes of trading to register a loss of 150 points as investors reacted to the deepening crisis in Asia and the exposure to the region of some of Britain's best-known corporate names. But London received a boost from Wall Street which, after an initial slump, bounced back.

The FTSE 100 index of leading shares closed 69.5 points lower at 5,068.8.

Anatole Kaletsky, page 18
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Far East chaos, page 27
Stock Market, page 30



"I think we can predict it's not going to be the year of the fat cat"

Straw's son let off with caution for drug sale

By STEWART TENDLER AND PETER FOSTER



William Straw: "now learning the lessons"

THE 17-YEAR-OLD son of Jack Straw, the Home Secretary, was cautioned at a South London police station yesterday after admitting that he sold £10 of cannabis to a newspaper reporter.

William Straw was given the caution when he went to Kennington police station in south London with his father to answer bail yesterday afternoon. Shortly afterwards the Home Secretary and his son arrived back at the family's home but refused to comment.

Later in a statement, Mr Straw said: "William is now learning the lessons of this episode and he of course has my

support in doing so. I am grateful for the restraint shown towards him by most of the media. I hope that they will continue to agree that he should not suffer additionally simply because he is my son, nor should my family."

At The Mirror Dawn Alford, the reporter who bought the 1.92 grammes of cannabis, was told she will not face any charges. Another 17-year-old boy, who was arrested by police in connection with the drug deal, will also be cautioned.

The decision to caution William Straw had been recommended in a report from Scotland Yard to the Crown Prosecution Service on New Year's Eve. After studying the evidence, including a tape-recording made by the journalist, the

CPS agreed with the police recommendation and officers at Kennington decided to go ahead with the caution.

Under Scotland Yard rules, cautions are administered in the charging area of the station by an inspector. The charging area is where all prisoners are brought when they arrive in a station.

William Straw had to admit the offence and agree it would be dealt with by caution. He then signed a form confirming he accepted the caution.

The caution includes a warning that the offence could be brought up in court if he is convicted of any offence within three years.

Keeping secrets, page 37

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Is it a bird? Is it a plane? No, it's just superbloke

First the bad news. Bill Cash (C. Stone) is taking an interest in Scottish devolution. Moving the Second Reading of the Bill yesterday (and interrupted by the famous Euro-bore) a wry Donald Dewar warned Britain that Mr Cash may find in Edinburgh a substitute obsession for Maastricht.

Now the good news. This sketch has seriously undervalued Kenneth Clarke. I have suggested that the former Chancellor's ordinary blokeishness was an act. The untucked shirts, the self-drive

van to remove belongings from 11 Downing Street, the stay at a £25 per night Blackpool bed & breakfast establishment during the last Tory conference... all I have implied, were just calculated media stunts.

On Boxing Day your sketchwriter, bound for Eritrea, boarded an Ethiopian Airlines flight to Addis Ababa. In the crush for economy seats, I seemed to recognise a chubby figure accompanied by a lady with her hair in a bun. It was Kenneth and Gillian Clarke, with friends,



MATTHEW PARRIS
POLITICAL SKETCH

going to Uganda on a bird-watching holiday.

At the transit lounge in Addis Ababa, the former Chancellor walked straight past the inviting doors of the Golden Lion VIP Room and was to be seen at the public bar, quaffing Ethiopian beer from a bottle, among a crush of ordinary Ethiopian blokes. And whom should we spot a

fortnight later, on the flight back to London last Friday? Still travelling (with his friends) in the economy class — and by now tanned and tieless — Mr Clarke was doing his best to get some sleep in a cramped seat surrounded by noisy passengers and their babies, none of whom seemed to recognise him.

My last sighting of this

impressive bird (after an 11-hour flight) was outside Terminal Three at Heathrow, where the crumpled MP for Rushcliffe could be observed wheeling his luggage wearily around the pavements, disconsolately seeking the friend who was to collect him.

So Mr Clarke really is an unpretentious man. I am sorry I ever implied otherwise. I was until now unsure which wing of the Tory party to support: the Eurosceptics, whom I agree with, or the Europhiles, who are nicer. On the basis of that Addis Ababa

flight, I have decided to be a Europhile.

Another tanned political figure took the chair as the Commons reassembled yesterday for the new year. Betty Boothroyd's gorgeously golden-brown skin testified to a very sunny Christmas in West Bromwich this winter.

Among those she called during Defence Questions was Ann Clwyd (Lab, Cymon Valley), whose vigorous rebuttal of a charge of jumping a red light succeeded recently in court, where she was acquitted. Yesterday she wanted the

Defence Secretary to bolster the "no-fly" zone over Kurdish safe havens with a "no-drive" zone too. Back at the wheel herself, this seemed dog-in-the-manger-ish.

Also present were four Liberal Democrats, Norman Baker (Lewes), Bob Russell (Colchester), David Heath (Somerton & Frome) and Mike Hancock (Portsmouth S) — between them sporting two beards, one waistcoat, one brushed-over bald patch and one pair of over-large spectacles.

They all sat together on the

bench. Questions on the Kurdish safe haven were heard from the Nerdish safe haven.

Norman Baker had come to ask the amiable Stuart Bell (representing the Church Commissioners) the cost of supporting the bishops. £13.7 million, said Mr Bell.

There were incredulous gasps. Mr Bell added, that did include heating "and lightning".

I had not realised the bishops could command natural phenomena. I thought that was Tony Blair.

Never on Sunday: Hague rota for marital bliss

By HELEN RUMBELOW

WILLIAM HAGUE yesterday revealed his plan for a successful marriage — scheduling time with his wife in the same efficient way he finessed his political ascent.

The leader of the Conservatives, who has been married less than a month, said that he would avoid the pitfalls of other political marriages by spending one weekend a month and every Sunday with Ffion. But his recipe for marital bliss drew a sceptical response from marriage counsellors and agony aunts.

"We are going to have a real marriage, not just one that passes as ships in the night," he told listeners to Talk Radio.

"We have set ourselves an agenda to spend time together. We will spend every Sunday together, one weekend in four together and have two holidays a year."

Mr Hague's views on marriage were viewed as unromantic by counsellors and agony aunts, although most agreed his native Yorkshire common sense in the matter was more sensible than trusting to spontaneous passion.

Julia Coles, a marriage therapist with Relate, said the Hagues were an ideal example of a couple that should also include love-making within their timed programme. "If they are going to make this

schedule together, they should build in time for love-making, often a casualty when a relationship comes into difficulties," she said.

"It can be just as good when it is planned as when it is spontaneous." The rest of the day should be spent doing mundane things, she said, like watching favourite videos uninterrupted by phone calls.

Claire Rayner, writer and broadcaster, said that although the plan sounded rigorously scheduled, it was essential to maintaining a relationship in the high pressure political field.

"Look what happened to the Cooks," she said. "You really do have to be very practical about keeping time free to spend together."

Cook must leave partner behind

Continued from page 1

that a Sunday newspaper planned to publish details of his relationship with Mrs Regan.



Regan: unnerved by intense media attention

Mr Cook's decision to travel alone came after a Conservative backbencher raised questions about the taxpayer funding Mrs Regan's costs when she accompanies Mr Cook abroad on official visits.

Peter Viggers, the MP for Gosport, said: "I see that he is taking Mrs Regan with him on overseas visits. I think the taxpayer is entitled to ask whether she is travelling in her capacity as his secretary or his mistress and why should the public pay?"

His remarks came after the Foreign Office confirmed that Mrs Regan had been accompanying the Foreign Secretary on official visits because she is regarded as his "established partner". Her latest appearance was at the Commonwealth Heads of Government meeting in Edinburgh in October, where she enjoyed the same rights and responsibilities as a spouse.

Downing Street and the Foreign Office insisted that Mr Cook had scrupulously

abided by Paragraph 83 of the Ministerial Code which says that the travel costs of a spouse or partner of a minister will be paid from the public purse for certain official functions. A Foreign Office spokesman said: "The spouse or partner of a minister will, from time to time, go on foreign trips in that capacity. They will have their own separate programme but will play a full part in the visit."

Mr Cook will kick off the tour in Washington on Thursday when he meets Al Gore, the US Vice-President.

However other commentators said that the schedule sounded too inflexible, and smacked of a man inexperienced in relationships. Virginia Ironside, a writer on personal relationships, said it was too much like the rigid schedules of the workplace.

"It would be better if he could be more flexible and loose," she said. "But this is partly the plan of someone who doesn't have a clue, who thinks that they can run a marriage like business."

It was one thing, she said, to have a schedule for who was to do the washing up, another for your romantic life. "It sounds rather cold and rather unrealistic," she said.

Mr Hague did reveal a romantic side, when describing how he proposed to Ffion — who works as a civil servant — in his local restaurant in Yorkshire, although he did not get down on one knee. "It would have been difficult within the confines of the restaurant," he said.

And he may have already learned one of the first lessons in the art of marriage: diplomacy. After being pressed on the dilemma of clashing invitations to dinner with his mother-in-law and Baroness Thatcher, he said: "It would have to be drinks with Lady Thatcher and dinner with my mother-in-law."



Mo Mowlam, the Northern Ireland Secretary, arriving at Stormont yesterday

Blueprint for the talks

THIS is the text of the blueprint for the Northern Ireland talks, "Propositions on heads of agreement".

Balanced constitutional change, based on commitment to the principle of consent in all its aspects by both British and Irish Governments, to include both changes to the Irish Constitution and to British constitutional legislation.

Democratically elected institutions in Northern Ireland, to include a Northern Ireland Assembly, elected by proportional representation, exercising devolved executive and legislative responsibility over at least the responsibilities of the six Northern Ireland Departments, and with provisions to ensure that all sections of the community can participate and work together successfully in the operation of these institutions and that all sections of the community are protected.

A new British-Irish Agreement to help establish close co-operation and enhance relationships, embracing:

- An intergovernmental

council to deal with the totality of relationships, to include representatives of the British and Irish Governments, the Northern Ireland Administration and the devolved institutions in Scotland and Wales, with meetings twice a year at summit level.

- A North/South Ministerial Council to bring together those with executive responsibilities in Northern Ireland and the Irish Government in particular areas. Each side will consult, co-operate and take decisions on matters of mutual interest within the mandate of and accountable to the Northern Ireland Assembly and the Oireachtas respectively. All decisions will be by agreement between the two sides, North and South.
- Suitable implementation bodies and mechanisms for policies agreed by the North/South Council in meaningful areas and at an all-Ireland level.
- Standing intergovernmental machinery between the

Irish and British Governments, covering issues of mutual interest, including non-devolved issues for Northern Ireland, when representatives of the Northern Ireland Administration would be involved.

Provision to safeguard the rights of both communities in Northern Ireland, through arrangements for the comprehensive protection of fundamental human, civil, political, social, economic and cultural rights, including a Bill of Rights for Northern Ireland supplementing the provisions of the European Convention and to achieve full respect for the principles of equity of treatment and freedom from discrimination, and the cultural identity and ethos of both communities. Appropriate steps to ensure an equivalent level of protection in the Republic.

Effective and practical measures to establish and consolidate an acceptable peaceful society, dealing with issues such as prisoners, security in all its aspects, policing and decommissioning of weapons.

Union's row with TUC may trigger strike

By ADAM JONES

AN 18,000-strong union resigned from the Trades Union Congress yesterday in a row over allegations of racism and poaching of members. The dispute could spill over into a strike by 300 Ford workers.

The resignation of the United Road Transport Union (URTU), a TUC member for about 100 years, was described by a TUC spokeswoman as "the first in living memory". It was prompted by the TUC's decision not to sanction the transfer of 300 lorry drivers at Ford's Dagenham plant from the Transport & General Workers' Union (TGWU) to URTU.

The 300 drivers had moved after a row over alleged racism. The drivers are paid well — about £27,000 on average, according to one estimate — and they control selection of new drivers. They were accused of discriminating against ethnic minorities. Allegations by seven Ford workers from ethnic minorities received the backing of the TGWU and were settled with a compensation payment from Ford.

The 300 drivers subsequently left the TGWU for URTU in protest. TUC rules require the agreement of both unions before such a transfer can take place, however, and it ruled that URTU had to withdraw their membership and pay compensation to the TGWU.

The dispute has led to bitter exchanges between URTU and the TGWU. URTU said that no racism allegations have been proved, claiming the TGWU showed contempt for an individual's right to join a union of his or her choice, and that TUC rules contravened UK employment rights law. This is denied by the TUC, but a URTU spokesman said: "Why does the TGWU want them back if they are guilty of racism?"

The TGWU said it had acted at Ford in defence of the principle of equality and the interests of all trade unionists. The 300 workers have voted unanimously to authorise industrial action, which could involve a strike, over Ford's refusal to recognise URTU.

NEWS IN BRIEF

EU may ease ban on beef herds

Beef from the United Kingdom could start being sold abroad again by Easter, if the EU approves a scheme for a partial easing of the 1996 ban which is due to be put forward by the EU Commission tomorrow. After months of wrangling, the Commission is expected to endorse a proposal to allow meat from younger animals from Northern Ireland herds that are certified to have been free of BSE for at least eight years. But the return of British beef to Continental markets is far from certain. Fears over the safety of British beef are still running high and Germany and several other EU states may resist the Commission proposal.

Duke's solution

The Duke of Edinburgh has called for the private ownership of fish stocks to prevent them being wiped out. Speaking as President-Emeritus of the World Wide Fund for Nature, he said fishermen should be able to acquire proprietary rights to the fish they catch by buying a quota for a specified amount.

Dome sack call

Tory MPs have called for Sir Terence Conran to be sacked as an adviser to the Millennium Dome project after he said that Christianity should not dominate the exhibition. Ann Widdecombe said: "Anybody who does not recognise that this is nothing if not a Christian anniversary, should be sacked."

Plea for tickets

A delegation of football officials and police will travel to France today to plead for England's allocation of World Cup tickets to be increased. England are due to get 8 per cent of the tickets for each game. Some 32,000 fans in the England Members Club are contesting for a maximum of 5,000 tickets per match.

Guerin ruling

A man wanted by the Irish police in connection with the 1996 murder of Veronica Guerin, the journalist, has lost his High Court battle against being sent back to Ireland to face trial. Lawyers for John Gilligan, 45, from Dublin, are considering whether to appeal against the decision to the House of Lords.

Radical ruling

Radio 4 executives have rejected a new dramatisation of *King Lear* because the story involved a radical feminist who would be "out of date in Nineties Britain". A BBC spokesman said: "She has rather feminist politics that will seem rather old fashioned, so we aren't going ahead with it."

Memorial garden support grows

Continued from page 1

to have finalised its plans before the anniversary of the Princess's death in the summer and if work on a garden began at the end of the year, it could be ready in time for the millennium.

The proposals for a £10 million 16-acre memorial garden, attracting an estimated five million visitors a year, were put forward by the Royal Parks Agency. But local residents fear that the park will be damaged by the volume of people, traffic and pollution. Sir Ronald Arculus, chairman of the Kensington Court Residents' Association, said: "It was very

trying when thousands of people were milling about there. We cannot face that day after day, year after year."

Other proposals from the public have been for hospitals or a network of hospices across the country, bearing the Princess's name; a new footbridge across the Thames; a special coins issue and the use of the Princess's head on bank notes. It has also been suggested that the Severn Crossing should be renamed. The idea of a national public holiday has received a cool response from the Government.

Decisions about how any memorial would be funded have yet to be taken.

although the Treasury has confirmed that no money will be drawn from the charity fund set up in the Princess's name, now standing at £35 million.

The committee comprises Mr Brown and Lady Sarah; the Princess's friends Rosa Monckton and the film director Lord Attenborough; Lord Camoys, the Lord Chamberlain; the Princess's butler and lawyer, Paul Burrell and Anthony Julius; the former *Blue Peter* presenter Diane Louise Jordan; Jane Tewson, co-founder of Comic Relief; and the former Overseas Development Minister Baroness Chalker.

Easier route to suing

REFORMS to make it easier for people to sue the insurers of negligent individuals or companies who have gone bankrupt are today proposed by the Law Commissions of England and Wales and of Scotland (Frances Gibb writes).

The Third Parties (Rights Against Insurers) Act 1930 suffers from several defects, the Commissions say in their consultation papers. One is that the courts have ruled that

a victim cannot make a claim against an insurer until the case against the wrongdoer has been proved.

This can force the victim to take up to three sets of legal proceedings. The victim may find that there is no insurance or the insurer may refuse to pay and another set of proceedings is needed.

Instead, the Commissions suggest that the law should be changed so that victims can bring a claim against the

insurer without first having to prove the claim against the wrongdoer.

They also propose that the victim should be given information about the insurance policy at an earlier stage than now, including any defences on which the insurers may want to rely.

□ Law Commission consultation paper No 152 and Scottish Law Commission discussion paper No 104 (Stationery Office; £20)

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'They put a gun to my head and threatened to shoot me. I thought it was all over'

Tanker woman tells of night she was shot in pirate battle

By KATHRYN KNIGHT

A MERCHANT Navy officer told yesterday how she was shot twice when caught in crossfire between police and pirates who had stormed her ship while she was on nightwatch. At one point they held a gun to her head and threatened to kill her.

Second Officer Deborah Harrison, 28, said she was used as a human shield by the pirates, who invaded the Shell tanker *Isomeria* in Santos harbour in Brazil on Friday, armed with small sub-machineguns. In the middle of the shooting, she said she managed to push a terrified young cadet standing directly in the line of fire into a recess.

Mrs Harrison was treated for wounds to her chest and elbow in a Brazilian hospital after the 30-minute drama. But yesterday she was able to fly back to London with her seaman husband, John.

Mrs Harrison, who has been at sea for nine years, said she had taken over the watch at midnight, relieving the third mate, who told her he was going ashore. "At about ten past 12 the third mate came up the gangway escorted by two men with guns and wearing balaclavas. He said, 'We have a problem' and the armed robbers were saying, 'We want to see the captain. We want to see the cash. We want to see the safe.'"

Mrs Harrison said she tried to explain there were few valuables on board but, together with the third mate, was forced to take them to the captain's cabin, where the gang became angry when they found there was no money in the safe. "They started to collect as many valuables as they could."

A third member of the gang, wearing two guns suspended

from a string round his neck, then arrived and the three marched Mrs Harrison, her captain, Gerry Peace, and the third mate to her room where they took her jewellery and camera before locking the two men inside.

"They then led me below deck, where the next thing I saw was a cadet, very white and very shaken. What I didn't know was that he had seen a fourth robber shot dead by police. When the gang saw this had happened, they started shooting back at the police. I grabbed the cadet and shoved us into an alcove out of the line of fire." However, the

berused because I thought that in the films they would start coughing and spluttering and fall over, but I was still moving. It felt like a muscle pain."

Still being dragged along the maze of corridors on the ship, she was shot again in the elbow as the gang tried to make their escape. But her most frightening moment, she said, was when the gang put a gun to her head and threatened to shoot her. "That was a scary time and I thought it was all over. They also put a gun to my stomach and threatened to shoot if the police tried to shoot them. Those were two times I was very frightened."

As they reached the gangway, Mrs Harrison said the bandits tried to pull her down to their escape boat. "I tried to explain I was of no more use to them, and in the end I spread myself between them and the police so they could get away and release me."

The gang made their escape and Mrs Harrison ran and hid before being rescued by police. She was treated for flesh wounds to her chest and arm, but said she would never know if she was shot by the pirates or by police. "There were so many bullets flying around at the time." Two of the pirates were killed.

Speaking at Gatwick airport yesterday, Mrs Harrison denied being particularly brave in helping the young cadet, Matthew Forrester, 20, out of harm's way. "He hadn't been on board that long and I knew the ship better. I knew what would be the safest place. It was my watch and it was up to me what we should do." She said one of her main concerns had been to avoid an explosion on the tanker, which was carrying butane and propane gases and which was discharging propane.

Her husband flew out to São Paulo to see his wife and returned to London with her yesterday for an emotional reunion with her parents, Paula and Brian Wood. "She sent me a telex saying she had a couple of scratches but when I telephoned the captain, and found out what had really

happened, you cannot imagine what went through my mind," Mr Harrison said.

John Gyles, general manager of fleet operations for Shell, said the company was extremely proud of Mrs Harrison's bravery. "Four guys coming on board with serious firearms and ready to use them is as serious an event as we have ever come across in 30

or 40 years. We are extremely proud of her, she was as calm and as brave as we could hope anybody could be."

Mrs Harrison harboured a teenage ambition to go into the Merchant Navy and joined as a cadet, trained by Shell, after completing her A levels in 1988. Since qualifying in November 1992, she has sailed on various ships in the Shell fleet

and last year gained her chief officer's and second engineer's certificates. She is one of the few women trained as an engineer and a navigator and hopes to attain captain's status within a year. Last year, she also became only the third woman to receive the prestigious Victoria Drummond award for outstanding service in the Merchant Marine.

The magistrate, Alan Baldwin, committed the singer to Leicester Crown Court, to be sentenced by the same judge who made the work order. Morrison was jailed for three months in May last year after being convicted of threatening a photographer and assaulting a fan in separate incidents.

Sarah Bynoe, a worker at the day centre, said she had contact with the man claiming to be Morrison, and on one occasion she went to a rubbish dump with him. Soon afterwards, when the man was switched to another project, her daughter had shown her a picture of Morrison in a magazine. "It didn't look the same as the man on the project. Morrison was much darker, and there was a very visible nose stud."

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Deborah Harrison at Gatwick yesterday. She suffered flesh wounds to her chest and arms in the attack

Cheating rap star finds that he has no equal

By KATHRYN KNIGHT

THE rap singer Mark Morrison faces another prison sentence, after being found guilty of using an impostor to carry out his community service for a previous offence.

Morrison, 25, had been sentenced to 150 hours' community service by Leicester magistrates for affray. But for the first 80 hours, until he was rumbled, he was using a stand-in, who wore a hat and dark glasses to work at the Broadway Project day centre in Shepherd's Bush, Marylebone magistrates were told.

His deception was unveiled by Mark Thomas, a News of the World journalist, after a tip-off. The singer, who had a No 1 hit *Return of the Mack*, had already been the subject of breach proceedings after originally failing to turn up for the work in October 1996.

Yesterday a court was told that the stand-in had a different haircut, a different build and, unlike Morrison, no scar on the right side of his face. He refused to sign an autograph for a photographer.

Mr Thomas saw the impostor picked up in a chauffeur-driven Mercedes, which he tailed to Morrison's management offices in Notting Hill. The impostor was dropped off, then the Mercedes went to Morrison's home, where the real Morrison got in.

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Father gets life for knife attack

By STEPHEN FARRELL

A MAN who repeatedly stabbed his daughter and sister-in-law with a sin boning knife after they refused to tell him the whereabouts of his estranged wife was jailed for life yesterday.

Tommy Elden, 48, continued to stab and kick the bodies after the victims pretended to be dead and was caught after one of the women, who had hidden a mobile telephone in her hair, called for help.

Elden, from Horsford, Norfolk, admitted two charges of attempted murder at his home in February last year. Jailing him at Norwich Crown Court, Judge David Mellor described Elden as "selfish, vicious and manipulative".

He stabbed his sister-in-law, Karen Newman, 59 times and his 18-year-old daughter, Laura, 34 times as she pleaded: "Don't do it, Dad. I thought you loved me. I love you."

The court was told that Elden's wife, Margaret, 42, left him after 24 years in November 1996 and called him shortly before the attack to say she was not returning. Mrs Newman described how Elden had then summoned them to the house on the pretext of collecting his belongings, then locked them in.

"He said we were going to die and we were not going to see daylight again," she said.

Families' pleas keep car killer out of jail

By HELEN JOHNSTONE

A CAMBRIDGE undergraduate who crashed his car and killed two friends when almost three times over the prison sentence yesterday after an appeal by the families of his victims. David Sage, whose son, Jonathan, died, said jailing John Were, 21, would simply extend his own family's suffering.

There were five of Were's friends in the car on the night and two of them were killed when it crashed into a tree. All the young men, who had been at a 21st birthday party, were former Radley College schoolboys. In an unusual move, Mr Sage told Oxford Crown Court that "responsibility for the crash should be shared by the others in the car, including his son."

Minutes earlier, the court had heard that, although Were, of Newbury, Berkshire, had driven his mother's car on

the night of the crash only after succumbing to pressure from the others, he had insisted on taking full responsibility for what happened.

Mr Sage said that sending Were to prison would cause him and his wife "some degree of horror. It would be quite a devastating shock and would not help us at all. We have no feelings of retribution towards John at all. I feel quite clear in my own mind I would actually like to help him to return to some degree of normal life as much as possible."

The court was told that the families of the other victims had made statements along similar lines, including Air Vice-Marshal Ronald Elder, whose son, Ross, was injured. He said that it was absolutely in character for Were — a "loyal team player and not a leader among his peer group" — to take full responsibility for an accident which, to his

mind, was the result of a peer-group decision.

Outside court, Were, a Trinity College student, appeared overwhelmed by their actions. Looking red-faced and perspiring heavily, he shook hands and hugged the parents of his victims as they left court. He said he had fully expected to go to prison.

Lisa Cohen, 19, from London, and Were's best friend, Jonathan Sage, from Kim Green, Berkshire, died instantly in the accident at Mapledurham, Oxfordshire, on July 5, last year. One passenger, Simon Dixon, is still receiving intermittent hospital treatment.

Paul Reid, for the prosecution, said the accident happened in the early hours of the morning after a group of youths decided to go for a drive, with Were at the wheel. Minutes later the car crashed.

Witnesses at the scene described how Were immediately admitted being at fault, saying: "These are my friends. Look what I have done. I have killed them."

Adrian Redgrave, QC, for the defence, said Were had arranged to stay the night at the party venue and had not planned to drive.

Sentencing Were to 18 months, suspended for a year, and a two-year driving ban, Judge Charles Harris said there were exceptional circumstances in "this most tragic case" which allowed him to avoid a prison sentence.



Were, left, and his supporter Air Vice-Marshal Elder

Teenager walks again after 100ft fall

By PAUL WILKINSON

A YOUNG man who jumped from the eighth floor of a burning tower block has made a remarkable recovery after being told that he might be permanently crippled.

Paul McNally's 100ft fall on to a concrete walkway left him with a fractured skull, a broken back and neck, a crushed chest and pelvis and broken arms. Doctors told his family that, if he recovered, he would almost certainly be confined to a wheelchair.

But three months after the accident,

Mr McNally, 19, of Sheffield, is walking with crutches. "Everyone seems to be amazed at the speed of my progress," he said. "I was determined to get back on my feet. I used a wheelchair at first, but now the doctors believe I will make an almost total recovery."

Mr McNally was visiting a friend at Bewick Court, the tallest residential building in Newcastle upon Tyne, when a fire broke out in the early morning. "I expected to die when I jumped from the window. It was a choice between burning to death or dying in the fall, and I decided on the fall. I thought it would be quicker.

Flames and smoke were all around me and it was so hot that the TV and video were melting. I smashed the window and just jumped. The next thing I remember is waking up in hospital with a tube in my throat and all sorts of instruments around me."

He spent two months in intensive care at the Royal Victoria Infirmary in Newcastle, where doctors feared brain damage or paralysis. He has since been transferred to the Northern General Hospital at Sheffield, where he is having physiotherapy to restore the feeling in his legs. He is allowed home at weekends.

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Secret of how Monty kept on top of Rommel

By RICHARD FORD

FIELD-MARSHAL Montgomery, victor of El Alamein, brought back to England a grey stallion he captured from Rommel to be stabled at Windsor Castle, government papers kept secret for 50 years reveal.

Montgomery kept the horse belonging to the German commander, who was his great rival in the Western Desert, even though he was not a stylish horseman.

The grey, named Rommel, was stabled at Windsor Castle after Montgomery returned to Britain in 1946 to the War Office to become Chief of the Imperial General Staff. Montgomery was pictured on the horse in Germany at the end of the Second World War, but his desire to have the animal stabled in Britain has been disclosed in Foreign Office papers released by the Public Record Office in Kew.

They show that, before final permission was given for the stallion to be sent to Britain, the authorities had to decide whether the animal could be legitimately classed as war "booty" rather than property looted from a defeated Germany.

The Royal Household was concerned that there should be no suggestion that the stallion was loot, especially as there



Rommel: Montgomery's great rival in the desert

servant: "Monty has asked the King if a home can be found at Windsor for the... stallion which he [Monty] captured from Rommel. HM [His Majesty] is agreeable to this, but before so informing Monty, I want to assure myself that there is no risk of the animal being considered loot."

In the letter, he said he thought the animal could be fairly classed as "military equipment captured in action", but wanted confirmation. The letter to Sir Arthur Street, Permanent Secretary at the Office of Control Commission, Germany and Austria, shows that Monty was intending to bring the horse over with the rest of "his luggage" when he gave up his job as Commander-in-Chief of the British Forces of Occupation.

A day after receiving the note, Sir Arthur replied briefly that there would be no problem over the horse. He wrote: "Many thanks for your letter. He [the stallion] is genuine 'booty' and there will be no difficulty about bringing him here."

The horse arrived in Britain and is thought to have been stabled in the Royal Mews at Windsor. A spokeswoman for Buckingham Palace confirmed that the horse had been kept at Windsor but did not know for how long. Nigel Hamilton, author of a



Field-Marshal Montgomery astride Rommel in 1945. There were fears the stallion would be considered loot

biography of Montgomery, said he thought the stallion was one which Rommel had hoped Mussolini would use at the end of a triumphant North African campaign.

"Before the Battle of Alamein, he [Rommel] intended to

ask Mussolini to ride into Cairo on this white charger," he said.

Professor Hamilton said that Montgomery was not interested in horses and that, when he was pictured on them, it was usually posed.

"He used to ride quite a lot as a young man, but was not very good. He was considered to be a fast, but not very stylish, horseman. He did ride point-to-point before the war, but his view was that horses stood between the British Army and

modernisation." He added that one of Montgomery's lungs had been almost shot away during the First World War. "He was never really up to riding after that and, though he posed on horses, he was rather uncomfortable."

Teachers to strike over laser pen attack

By DAVID CHARTER
EDUCATION CORRESPONDENT

TEACHERS yesterday voted to strike rather than teach a 15-year-old boy who shone a laser pen into the eyes of a science master.

The 16 members of the NASUWT agreed to walk out if they had to supervise the boy, who was expelled but allowed back by an independent appeal panel. The teachers at Bristol Hall High School in Oldbury, near Birmingham, said a strike could be avoided if the boy received one-to-one tuition or moved to another school.

The science teacher was temporarily blinded and has been off work suffering from trauma since the incident on November 5.

Governors expelled the boy on the advice of the headmaster, but teachers were angered after an independent panel backed the parents' appeal and returned him to school. He attended yesterday and his parents are due to meet the headmaster today.

Mr Paul Hayler

The assertion that Paul Hayler helped to disguise a policy that he knew to be unlawful (Westminster council appeals report, December 20) should have been attributed to the district auditor's report. Mr Hayler's appeal against these findings, which Lord Justice Rose expects to succeed, has yet to be heard.

CORRECTION

□ An agency report (January 2) wrongly stated that Andrew Frair, of Calcott, Berkshire, had been found hanged at his home. In fact, the man who died was Colin Reavill, and we apologise for the error.

□ Andrew Gammans and Brian Jarman, convicted of knocking more than 2.2 million miles off the clocks of 38 cars (report, January 9), were jailed for 3½ years and 2½ years respectively.

Scots pipers bag applause in US

EAT your combined hearts out. Sir Elton John, Oasis and the Spice Girls. The next British musical sensation to hit North America will be the pipes and drums of the 1st Battalion, the Black Watch (Alan Hamilton writes).

The skirling Highlanders leave Scotland tomorrow for a three-month coast-to-coast tour of 55 cities and expect to play to a total live audience of 300,000 fans, not to mention appearances on television and a probable invitation to serenade the Clintons at the White House. Thirty-three

musicians from the Perth-based regiment and four Highland dancers will undertake the tour, sponsored by Columbia Records.

The Black Watch were seen internationally last year, when they played the British colonial power out of Hong Kong, and were the last British soldiers to leave before the arrival of the People's Liberation Army. Lieutenant-Colonel Stephen Lindsay, Black Watch regimental secretary, said yesterday that the pipes and drums had made several previous

American tours, and their venues — ice rinks, football stadiums and others large arenas — were almost always sold out.

"Obviously there is a large expatriate element, but thousands of people with no Scottish connection seem to like the sound of the pipes," he said. Of all Scottish regimental bands which visit America, there is a particular fondness for the Black Watch. Part of the secret, he says, is playing American tunes, with *The Battle Hymn Of The Republic* and *Amazing Grace* popular.

Pop awards go with Verve

THE Spice Girls, who stole the show at last year's Brit Awards, discovered last night that 12 months is a long time in pop (Carol Midgley writes). The band has been nominated for one award this year — not for music, but for the video of *Spice Up Your Life*.

Last year they were nominated in four categories and won two, for best single and best video. Their crown

looked set last night to be handed to the Wigan band the Verve, nominated in four categories plus best British producer. The Verve have had a No 1 single and their *Urban Myths* topped the album charts.

They left behind the Prodigy, with three nominations plus best producer, Radiohead with three and Oasis with three. Fleetwood Mac

will be honoured for their outstanding contribution to the British music industry in the ceremony at London Docklands Arena on February 9. It will be televised the next day.

The Spice Girls' all-female rivals All Saints gained three nominations and Sir Elton John's record-breaking single *Candle in the Wind 97* gained him one of two nominations.

BEFORE YOU MAKE UP YOUR MIND ABOUT PERSONA

You may be aware of recent publicity in the media about PERSONA, some of which has been inaccurate. When anything new comes onto the scene it will always attract a lot of attention so it is important that you have the facts.

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PERSONA is the result of 15 years research and it has been tested in one of the largest clinical trials ever conducted in Europe for contraceptive products.

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WHAT DOES THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH THINK OF PERSONA?

After an exhaustive study into the efficacy and reliability of PERSONA the Medical Devices Agency welcomed it as a "useful addition to the range of contraceptive choice". Their appointed expert, who evaluated the PERSONA clinical trial said that it was one of "the best" he had seen and concluded that he "accepted without reservation, the results"

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WHAT DOES THE MEDICAL PROFESSION THINK ABOUT PERSONA?

"A major scientific advance" — John Bonnar, Professor of Obstetrics and Gynaecology, Trinity College Dublin.

"A useful adjunct to our armoury of contraceptive methodology" — John Newton, Professor of Gynaecology, Birmingham Women's Hospital.

"Natural family planning is an important choice for women. The Family Planning Association welcomes the availability of PERSONA in contributing to that choice". — Ann Weyman FPA.

WHAT DO YOU SAY ABOUT PERSONA?

There are tens of thousands of satisfied users of PERSONA in Britain and Europe.

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Like most methods of contraception, PERSONA is not suitable for everyone.

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But, if you are in a stable relationship and may be planning to have a family some time in the future, or are "spacing" your children then PERSONA is a very attractive option.

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Speak to your doctor or family planning advisor about it.

For further information call the PERSONA Careline on 0345 44 77 44.

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Students are plumping for a further education course offering practical help for the feather-brained

New course covers that most vexing modern task

By PAUL WILKINSON

FURTHER education students struggling with the mysteries of nuclear physics or German syntax can now opt to wrestle with a more practical subject: the duvet.

The perennial domestic problem of how to get the corners of the quilt into the corners of the cover in less than a day has finally been addressed. Men and women at the end of their tether can sign up for an hour-long lecture on duvet proficiency organised by the North Yorkshire Training and Enterprise Council.

They will be instructed by



Jill Burgess demonstrates the fine art of covering a duvet: ensure the corners are in place at the bottom before tacking the top; a firm shake and everything should fall into place

staff from the Yorkshire bed linen chain Ponden Mill, who will hand out certificates of merit at the end of their in-store training sessions.

One of the instructors, Jill Burgess, a window display manager who takes just 15 seconds to achieve compatible corners, said: "We get a lot of bewildered customers asking how to do it, especially with a lot of people still changing from the traditional sheets and blankets."

Apart from changing the cover on the double bed she shares with her husband Richard, at their home in Harrogate, Mrs Burgess, 30, sets up an average of five duvets a day in window displays for her employer's 40 shops around the North. "It's one of those things you take for granted when you're in the business. Because you can do it, you don't realise how people can struggle."

"Size is the problem. A

single duvet is easy, but these days people are tending to buy king-size beds."

The idea is part of a series of "Bite-Sized Courses" run by the Tec. The council ran a similar programme last year after canvassing the public for ideas about everyday problems they wanted help over.

These included how to reverse

a car into a parking space and choosing the right wine for a dinner party. The course was so successful with more than 500 people taking part that they decided to repeat it.

Hilary Lynch, of the Tec, said: "We want to encourage people who would not normally think of studying by giving them something relevant to

their daily lives that they can learn in an hour. Once they have tried this, perhaps they will want to go on to something else to improve themselves."

"We asked people for ideas for things they really wanted to learn. One member of the public said, 'I would love to know how to put on a duvet

cover.' Everybody said they found it difficult to do."

Other courses this year include writing a press release, car maintenance, writing a CV and first steps on the Internet.

The courses are free to the public and will be held in colleges, libraries and private businesses across the county.

The method of duvet stuff-

ing Mrs Burgess swears by is a three-step manoeuvre. First, tuck up the cover until you reach the bottom then push the bottom corners of the duvet into the corners of the cover. Pull the cover from the bottom round one edge of the duvet and tuck it in. Finally, give it a firm shake and it should fall into place.



Lost in his work, Whitworth finds himself in a corner

Searching for the right stuff

By DAMIAN WHITWORTH

AFTER struggling red-faced for an hour on a double bed in the middle of the afternoon, it was a compliment to make a man proud. "You've got lovely technique," said Tania.

Technique is everything when stuffing a duvet. You can't just start fumbling about and hope that in a few minutes it will all be over and you can go to sleep.

In my case, there was added pressure. I was performing with London shoppers watching, while Tania Kurkjian of Dickins & Jones in Regent Street offered words of encouragement.

Everyone, it seems, has their own little tricks. I am an experienced duvet stuffer, but I rely on somebody else holding the corners. I tried the Jill Burgess technique

first, with £110-worth of fine Egyptian king-size cotton cover. It takes her 15 seconds. It took me 1 minute 35.

Other approaches proved less satisfactory. Many swear by the method in which the cover is turned inside out two corners of the duvet are tucked into corners of the cover, and vigorous shaking shuffles the cover down. I managed to complete this in a touch over 2 minutes.

Mrs Burgess's suggestion that the duvet be folded before stuffing took even longer. A colleague's technique, whereby the stuffer stands up inside the cover like a starfish and pulls the duvet into the corners, was abandoned as impossible. But I had proved I was not a flop in the bedroom department.

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Teachers to strike over laser pen attack

Teachers in London and other parts of the country are expected to go on strike over a proposed law that would allow schools to use laser pens in lessons.

The Education Secretary, Kenneth Clarke, has announced that schools will be allowed to use laser pens to highlight text in books. This has caused concern among teachers who say it could be used to distract pupils or even cause eye damage.

Mr Paul Haylor, a teacher in London, said: "I've been using laser pens for years and I've never had any problems. But I'm worried about the new law because it could be used to distract pupils or even cause eye damage."

Mr Paul Haylor, a teacher in London, said: "I've been using laser pens for years and I've never had any problems. But I'm worried about the new law because it could be used to distract pupils or even cause eye damage."

CORRECTION

Correction: In the article on page 10, the name of the teacher who said "I've been using laser pens for years" was misspelled. It should be Paul Haylor, not Haylor.

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Women divided as gap widens between the classes

Nigel Hawkes and Ian Murray on differences at work, at home and on the scales

A WIDENING class divide among women was revealed by two government-funded surveys yesterday. Women in the professional classes were shown to have gained from maternity rights, maintaining their careers after having children. They are also slimmer, but they are drinking more.

has been rising while the rest of the nation's has fallen. The findings on working mothers came from the Child Development Study, in which a group of people have been monitored since birth in 1958. At the time of the most recent set of interviews, in 1991, they had reached the age of 33, and three quarters of the women - 4,000 in total - had become mothers. Professor Heather Joshi, of the Social Statistics Research Unit at City University, London, compared

their experiences with those of a group born in 1946. More of the younger generation of mothers went back to work, and more quickly, but it depended enormously on their qualifications and education. The well-paid, high-status women could take leave with reasonable confidence that they would go back to their jobs. The working-class women found the process much harder.

Among the women born in 1946, half were working six years after having their first baby." Professor Joshi said. "Among the women born in 1958, that was down to 2.2 years. Among those with no qualifications, half were working within six years, the same as the 1946 cohort. Half of those with O levels were working within three years, and for those with degrees, half were working in less than a year. "This study confirms increasing polarisation in the labour force. There is the privileged group of women in the upper echelons of the

occupational scale. By remaining in their jobs, or taking only a very short break, these are less likely to suffer occupational downgrading and more likely to retain employment benefits. Women who lack these advantages are likely to have longer breaks from work, more jobs with substandard employment contracts and few fringe benefits, and less security. They face higher risks of poverty in old age through lack of pension cover." The 1996 health survey for Eng-

land revealed that women in the two highest social classes drank more than those in manual occupations: 15 per cent of women exceeded their recommended alcohol limit of 14 units a week, and most were in social classes I and II. While average blood pressures had fallen over the previous five years, the average was higher among women in manual classes. The likelihood of obesity was higher in manual than in non-manual social classes for men and women, but proportionately more women than men are too fat, with almost one in six classified as obese.

Helicopter pilot is blamed for crash that killed boy

By Shirley English

PILOT error was largely to blame for a helicopter crash in which a nine-year-old boy died during a flight organised by Noel Edmonds's charity Airborne, according to investigators.

A report into the tragedy, which happened last July near the Queen Mother's childhood home at Glamis Castle, Forfar, was published yesterday by the Government's Air Accident Investigation Branch and outlined the circumstances leading up to the crash.

Garry Malley, from Dundee, was one of four children and two adults, including the pilot, on board the five-seater Bell 206B helicopter, which was providing sky rides for children with special needs at a family fair at Glamis on July 13.

The report described how the Jet Ranger helicopter, supplied free by KwikFit of Edinburgh, was carrying too many people when it took off in poor weather with the windscreen badly "misted up" by condensation from the children's rain-drenched clothing.

Within a minute of take-off, the pilot, Bob Hobson, radioed the ground saying, "I can't see out of the windscreen" and indicated that he was going to land. But, as he attempted to bring the aircraft down in a nearby field, he failed to see a wire fence, crashed into it and nose-dived to the ground.

The force of the main rotor blade hitting the field flipped the helicopter on its side and, despite being strapped in, Garry was flung from the back passenger seat. He died after becoming trapped under the fuselage. The other four passengers and the pilot escaped unhurt.

Yesterday Mr Edmonds, who has kept in touch with Garry's family since the accident, joined the dead boy's parents in calling for a full independent inquiry. Tom Simpson and Sandra Malley said the report left many questions unanswered.

The Procurator Fiscal in Forfar is considering whether to hold a fatal accident inquiry. The pilot could also face criminal charges.

Pair hired butler with cash from drug deals

Russell Jenkins on a couple who went swiftly from debt to luxury

A COUPLE who set up a cocaine-smuggling operation when their debts began to mount turned their suburban home into a "palace" complete with a butler when the cash started rolling in.

Ronald and Sylvia Benn, both 40, played on their outwardly respectable appearance when they took their two daughters to the Continent on regular trips to buy and sell drugs. They made more money than they knew what to do with.

Yesterday Benn was jailed for nine years and his wife for six years by Manchester Crown Court after a two-week trial in October hailed by Customs and Excise as a successful prosecution, despite the fact that no drugs were ever seized.

The couple, from Rochdale in Lancashire, spent more than £500,000 on a lavish lifestyle which Benn, who was claiming disability benefit at the time, told neighbours was the fruits of selling pirate satellite television decoder cards abroad. As the money

accumulated in their hidden safe, they splashed out on his-and-hers Mercedes and BMWs, bought substantial shares in two Blackpool hotels and hired the butler to "do" for them.

Their lucrative business was brought to a halt when outbound Customs at Hull docks found £62,000 stuffed in bags in the BMW. The money was heavily impregnated with cocaine.

Benn kissed his wife in the dock before they were sentenced yesterday. Both had been found guilty of plotting to smuggle controlled drugs into Britain between January 1993 and November 1995.

Judge Anthony Hammond told them: "This is a very serious offence indeed. It involved substantial and numerous importations of cocaine, although there was no actual drug seizure."

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Ronald and Sylvia Benn and the house in Rochdale they transformed with the proceeds of their cocaine-smuggling trips to the Continent



have no doubt, bought drugs there."

Before the Benns made the first of 16 trips to the Continent, usually leaving from Hull and returning through a Channel port, they had debts of £26,000. Their lifestyle then improved dramatically.

Over the next two years, Benn, a failed motor dealer, and his wife were able to bank £138,000, pay off their mortgage arrears and take holidays in the Canary Islands and the United States. They

transformed their modest house on a small estate and Benn bought his wife a red Mercedes 350SL convertible as a birthday present and housed it in a specially built underground garage.

A local man, employed as their butler, was told to put any cash he found around the house while vacuuming into a chute through which it travelled through canisters and into a hidden safe.

David Turner, QC, for the prosecution, said that, after

Customs officers found more than £62,000 in various denominations stuffed into bags in the boot of the BMW, officers from Manchester airport were called in to examine the banknotes using the "shake and vac" method, in which notes are "hoovered" over tinfoil. They showed levels of cocaine contamination "far in excess of those normally found".

Fourteen officers raided the Benns' house. They seized paperwork and took samples, suitcases and money found in the safe. A dustbag from the couple's vacuum cleaner was examined and was found to contain high levels of cocaine.

Stephen Riordan, QC, representing Benn, who had a previous conviction for possession of drugs, said he had become involved in something that was not in his nature.

David Fish, QC, for Mrs Benn, said the case was a tragedy for her. She would be separated from their two daughters, Lindsay, 17, who

had a disability, and Vicky, 15, who had become ill through the strain of waiting for her parents' trial and sentencing.

A Customs and Excise spokesman said: "Despite looking like a respectable couple, the Benns were living an extravagant lifestyle on the back of an evil trade and the misery of others."

A further hearing has been set for ten weeks' time for the judge to assess how much money or goods the couple are liable to forfeit.

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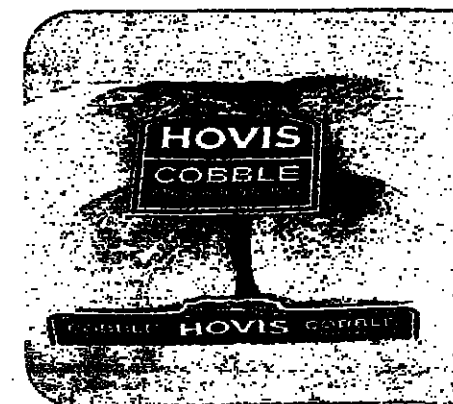
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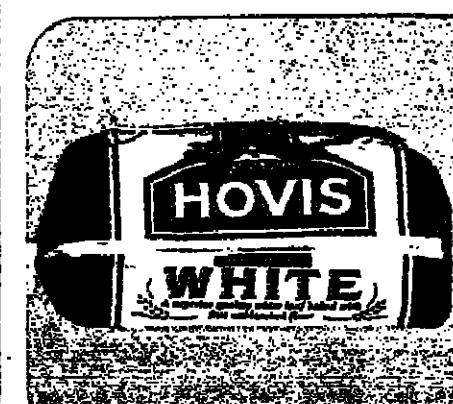
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Cautious police blamed as more killers go free

Detectives are being urged to act more quickly to stem a rise in unsolved murders, reports Stewart Tendler

MURDERERS are escaping justice because detectives are too slow and cautious, one of the country's most senior policemen claims.

David Phillips, Chief Constable of Kent and a national spokesman on CID, believes investigators are scared of making mistakes and facing legal challenges. They waste months on cases, giving killers time to destroy evidence.

Police teams rely on methodical investigation and become frightened to take risks and follow hunches. They ignore intelligence that could help them to find suspects quickly.

The concern about undetected murders comes after the annual number of unsolved cases almost doubled from 50 in 1987 to 93 in 1995. Last year police launched an investigation codenamed Enigma to examine 200 unsolved murders of women going back ten years or more.

Mr Phillips and other chief constables have appointed a team of experienced detectives to draw up national plans to improve investigations.

Police will be urged to make better use of computers and new techniques for analysing material, and will receive guidance on using bugging devices and other surveillance



Phillips investigators should back hunches

methods. They will be told not to fear attacks from defence lawyers.

Home Office ministers and the Inspectorate of Constabulary have been briefed on the police concerns and chief constables are also urging the creation of the first national databases on murder information.

The review is the first since the disastrous Yorkshire Ripper case in the late 1970s, which led to an overhaul of the way in which police deal with murder cases and investigations into serial crime. The

team will work with officers from the new national crime faculty at the Police National Staff College. They have the backing of senior detectives from across the country who expressed their anxieties at a conference last year.

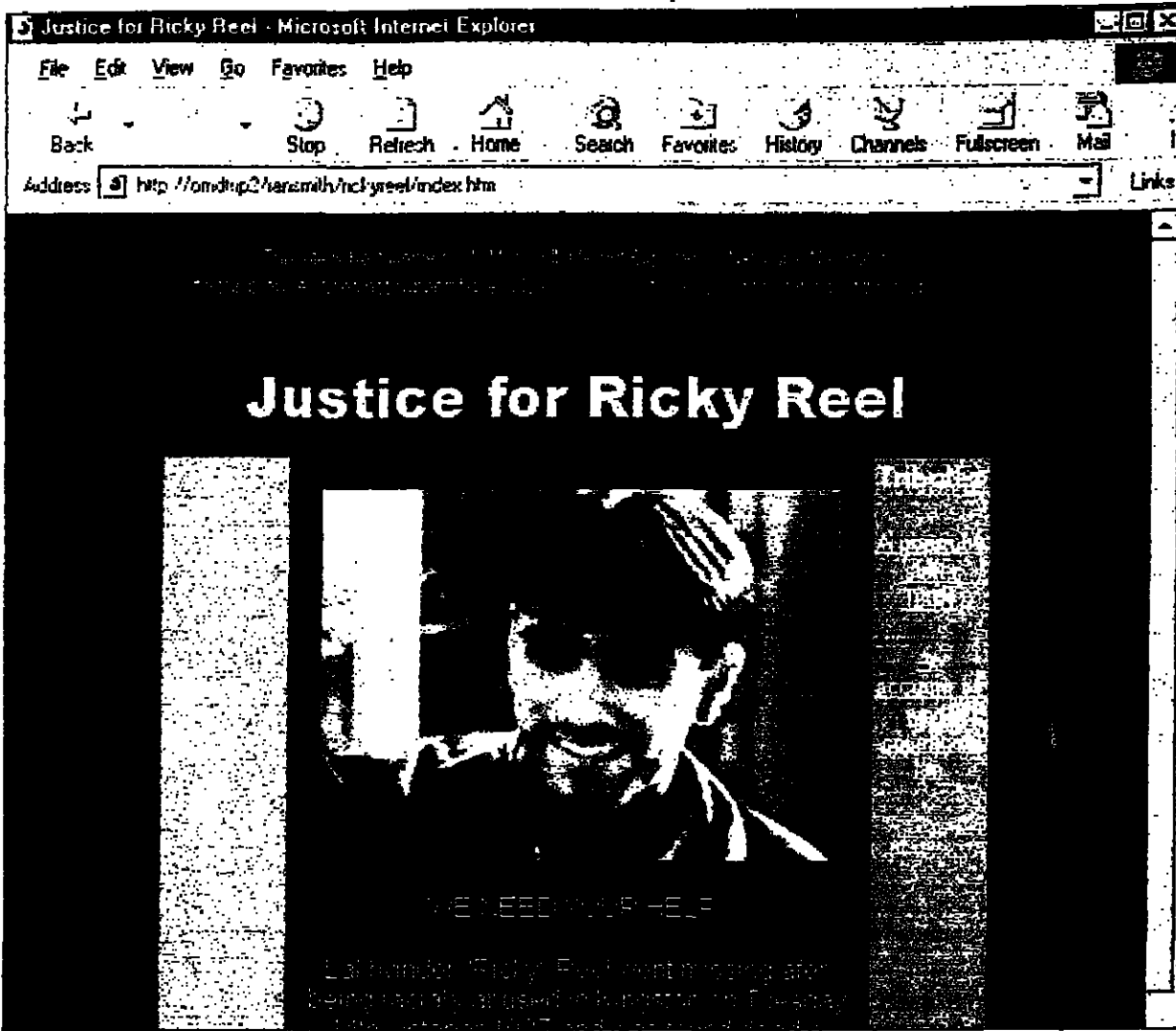
Mr Phillips, chairman of the Association of Chief Police Officers' crime committee, said: "I worry that a lot of budding investigation officers are too frightened of making mistakes and too frightened of criticism. They are in danger of playing so safe they don't take the quick route to detection."

"You can conduct an investigation which is beyond reproach but never gets anywhere. You have sometimes got to be able to get in very quickly while there is still recoverable evidence."

Mr Phillips said weeks of inquiries to narrow down the number of suspects might prove ineffective. Crucial evidence would have gone and interviewing a suspect might be a waste of time.

Lawyers had become adept at using the law to restrict access to their clients. Instead, detectives should use technology and data collections to draw up shortlists of suspects and act within days.

Mr Phillips said that, if a

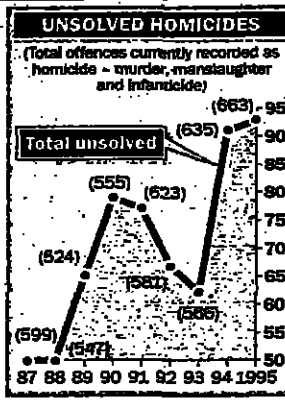


Ricky Reel's family created a Website to discover the truth about his death

suspect was discovered nine months after a death, the chances of conviction were slim. If police arrived within three days, the chances were good. "The traditional investigation system is a trawling system where nothing gets missed, but you might get to the crucial piece of evidence too late. We have got to find ways to get breaks early, when there is blood still on the boots of the suspect."

He was not surprised by the growth in unsolved cases. He said high-profile murders were "the kind of cases the public expects us to solve, but the criminal justice system is making it more and more difficult".

Courts demanded disclosure of material such as the identity of informants, lawyers were increasingly using legislation to challenge key evidence, and witnesses were intimidated. "I am quite sure murders are often undetected because of the restraints under which we work," he said.



Families criticise investigations that have led nowhere

By DANIEL MCGRODY

SUKHDEV REEL has spent three months trying to persuade police that the death of her son, Ricky, in October was a racially motivated murder and not an accident.

The 20-year-old Brunel University student had gone with three friends to Kingston upon Thames, southwest London, for a birthday celebration. As they were heading to a club, they were set upon by a gang of white youths, racially abused and attacked.

Mr Reel was last seen running away after the attack, at about midnight. Within hours, his parents asked the police to investigate his disappearance. Mrs Reel said: "The officer said perhaps he had a girl we wouldn't approve of or

had gone off with a man, and then he winked."

The family spent the next six nights searching the streets for him. A week after the attack, his body was found in the Thames near Kingston Bridge.

Mrs Reel, of Drayton, West London, said: "Because a couple of buttons were undone on the front of his trousers, the police said he must have fallen into the river while he was trying to go to the toilet. But how could a fit boy who did not drink or take drugs, fall in and drown in 4ft of water?"

"The police attitude was, 'We found his body that is our job done.' They have refused to stage a reconstruction any have ignored an anonymous



Jonathan Jones, wrongfully convicted, and Louise Sellars, killed in 1995. Neither case has been solved

letter sent to us naming the boys who killed Ricky."

When Jonathan Jones was freed by the Court of Appeal after being wrongfully con-



victed of murdering his girlfriend's parents at Llanharry, Mid Glamorgan, in July 1993, he was determined to discover how the police made so many mistakes. He

hired a computer expert and carried out his own inquiries.

"It beggars belief what they missed and how incompetent they were," he said. "I am still finding things they should have done, and after four years, they still haven't found the real murderer."

"A television documentary team turned up more fresh evidence in three weeks than the South Wales police had managed in three years, including vital eye witnesses."

He said that his computer expert was "appalled" by the inefficiency. "Officers didn't correlate information properly and clearly did not know how to use the system. They may as well have used a notebook and a pencil for all they use they made of the technology. What is so outra-

geous is that the officers who wrongly arrested me are the same ones still investigating this murder."

Stephen Lawrence, 18, was stabbed to death by a gang of white youths in Eltham, southeast London, in 1993. Police were criticised for not following leads early enough, which critics say would have identified the suspects. They have also been accused of missing vital evidence at the murder scene.

Elaine Sellars's 15-year-old daughter, Louise, was abducted in August 1995, 400 yards from her home in Appley Bridge, Lancashire. She was taken five miles away, battered about the head and strangled with a rope. "May-

be some of the police officers were too young and inexperienced to know what they are looking for," Mrs Sellars said. "The senior detectives were very good, but wouldn't give much away, so you feel enormous frustration. You do feel that they are petrified of making mistakes."

The mother of a five-year-old, daughter murdered two years ago, who did not wish to be named, said: "I am afraid that if I say anything about the frustration I feel, they will not put in as much effort in finding her killer. I telephone to ask what is happening and the answer is the same, that they are continuing their inquiries, and yet I know they have only a couple of officers working on it."

Widow dies after mugging



Bitley: heart attack

THE hunt for a mugger has turned into a murder investigation after the victim died (Russell Jenkins writes). Vera Bitley, a 73-year-old widow, died of a heart attack in hospital the day after she was robbed near her home in Greenacres, Oldham.

The thief ambushed Mrs Bitley from behind, snatching a black camera shopping bag as she made her way home from a supermarket on Thursday morning. Before she went to hospital,

Mrs Bitley was able to describe her attacker to police as a white teenager with short, fair hair; he was wearing a yellow jacket and jeans. Detectives appealed for anyone who saw Mrs Bitley, or a youth running away, to come forward. They also want to trace her shopping bag.

Superintendent Peter Stelfox, in charge of the inquiry, said: "She was very well known. She raised a family here and had four grandchildren who live near by."

Addict murdered spinster aged 93

A WOMAN of 93 was murdered by a crack-addicted burglar who stamped on her with such force that he left his footprint bruised into her head, the Old Bailey was told yesterday.

William McDonagh, 35, from Harrow, northwest London, was jailed for life after admitting murder and burglary last March. Judge Graham Boal described it as an "horrendous" crime. "You inflicted terrible and fatal injuries on a defenceless lady in her nineties - all to steal a relatively valueless, but no doubt to her priceless, possession."

Beatrice Hughes, a spinster, had worked in service before her retirement.

She lived in a flat in the Rayners Lane area of Harrow, and could walk only with the aid of a frame. She was 4ft 11in tall and suffered from heart disease, arthritis and non-malignant leukaemia. McDonagh tricked his way into her home, claiming that he was an upstairs neighbour and that there was a water leak. "He then carried out a vicious attack, stamping on her face and head, rendering her unconscious and causing her to lose consciousness," said Nigel Sweeney, for the prosecution. Miss Hughes died in hospital the following month.

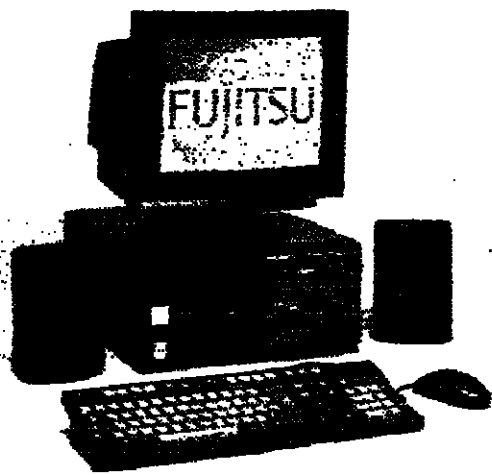
McDonagh, who had taken cocaine and cannabis earlier in the day, first

struck her in the hallway, knocking off her glasses. She was dragged feet first into the bedroom and attacked again. "She had a fractured nose, multiple fractures of the face and bleeding inside her skull," Mr Sweeney said.

Two male neighbours heard the commotion and ran in to find her lying on the floor. After a struggle, they managed to detain McDonagh, who tried to claim that the real burglar had got away. He had bluffed his way into the homes of two other victims in the previous 24 hours. Police were carrying out daytime surveillance on him at the time, but he attacked Miss Hughes at night.

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ITV takes a leaf out of BBC book to reverse decline

By CAROL MIDDLEY, MEDIA CORRESPONDENT

ITV pledged to halt its long-term audience decline yesterday by stealing viewers from BBC1 and breathing life back into the British sitcom.

Executives also promised to shed the network's glitzy gameshow image and invest in better quality factual programmes, documentaries, drama and sport to secure ITV's future with advertisers. Its strategy is to chase more upmarket and younger audiences in peak time, and housewives during the day.

The network will try on the BBC's clothes by emulating successes such as *Driving School*. The family sitcom, currently considered to be in crisis within the industry, would be nurtured by commissioning fewer but giving them longer runs to give them time to develop. Critics have

long lambasted ITV's contribution to television comedy programmes.

A spokesman for BBC Television said: "It is flattering if ITV is seeking to reinvent itself with BBC1 as its model, but the key to BBC1's success is its broad range of programmes and the fact that they are designed to please viewers, not advertisers."

ITV's share of audiences has been falling steadily and currently amounts to 38.5 per cent at peak time. It promised to reverse its audience decline by 1 percentage point of the share each year for the next two years.

The new viewers would be poached from BBC1, not from other advertising-funded channels, to maximise the commercial benefits to advertisers, Richard Eyre, ITV's

chief executive, said at a presentation in London.

David Liddiment, ITV's director of programmes, said there would be "no taboos" in his review of ITV's output. "I am not about to throw the baby out with the bathwater—but, equally, I will not shrink from difficult decisions."

He said that the comedians Dave Baddiel and Frank Skinner, signed to present a World Cup football show this summer, would enhance entertainment programmes, as would new formats such as *Ice Warriors*.

There would be more comedy dramas such as the award-winning *Cold Feet*, more late-evening panel games, sketch comedy and performance comedy. Drama successes such as *London's Burning* and *Heartbeat* would be renewed, and more dramas made.

ITN will be asked to carry out an "editorial review" of its programmes. *News At Ten* escaped being moved from its 10pm slot, which had looked likely, but it is believed that the issue will be addressed later in the year.

A dedicated controller for sport, Brian Barwick from the BBC, will oversee ITV's strongest portfolio of rights, including Formula 1 motor racing.



Some of the characters from the new *Ice Warriors*

Television, page 51

Britain is falling by the circus ringside

By JOANNA BALE

BRITAIN is lagging behind other countries in the development of animal-free "new circus", according to a report.

The latest issue of the *Policy Studies Institute's Cultural Trends* blames a lack of investment from public funds. It says that few British performers are full-time and most supplement their income with earnings from other employment.

Australia has put considerable public money into new circuses, and France and Canada have national strategies. The Canadian troupe *Cirque du Soleil*, a multimillion-pound business with 1250 artists, is playing to sell-out crowds at the Royal Albert Hall, but British circus, once a world leader, is struggling to keep up with the trend.

The institute's report suggests that, while traditional circus survives on box-office takings, new circus derives only 2 per cent of its income directly from ticket sales, the rest coming from promoters' fees, teaching fees and grants.

Sara Selwood, editor of *Cultural Trends*, said: "The phenomenal success of new circus shows how effective it can be to invest in cultural industries. *Cirque du Soleil*, who began as street performers, are now one of Canada's most successful worldwide exports... We need to decide whether we are prepared to rank new popular artforms as equals to the more traditional arts."



Cirque du Soleil: the Canadians have turned their act into big business

Villagers too rich for lottery funding, says vicar

By SIMON DE BRUELLES

THE vicar of a Devon resort awarded nearly £400,000 from the *National Lottery* to build a village hall has told his parishioners that they do not deserve it.

The Rev Ashley Manhire told residents that Shaldon was wealthy enough. Mr Manhire believes that needy communities in inner-city areas are more deserving, and attacked the system of allocating lottery cash.

He refused to help in the village's successful application for the Millennium Fund grant and is refusing to cooperate in the planning of the hall, opposite his church. The 1,500 residents voted by 95 per cent to support the application.

In his parish magazine, Mr Manhire, 67, said that he did not support the bid before it was submitted and now felt it was time to make his objections public. He repeated his view in a letter to a local newspaper, saying: "I do not believe a somewhat affluent village like Shaldon could qualify for such a grant, but circumstances have proved me wrong and I find the amount of almost £400,000 morally unacceptable."

"I try to preach the gospel of compassion, which means entering into the feelings of others and to get alongside their poverty and lack of jobs. The lottery funds could be used to create jobs in areas in need. I have spoken out only after much counselling, including talking to six fellow clergy who have said they would do the same. If this is happening here, it is happening elsewhere and I think the whole system of lottery funding needs to be looked at."

David Postlethwaite, chairman of Shaldon Parish Council, said: "There is a lottery outlet in the Spar shop and the villagers here play just as much as anyone else, so we are as entitled to lottery money as anywhere else."

Censor accuses Straw of playing to puritan vote in film row

By CAROL MIDDLEY, MEDIA CORRESPONDENT

THE chief film censor yesterday accused the Home Secretary of playing to the puritan gallery in cracking down on film, sex and violence.

James Ferman, director of the British Board of Film Classification, said politicians over-reacted and

tried to appear tough on issues of sex and violence to pander to certain voters. The board was attacked by Jack Straw last year after new rules on sexually explicit material allowed two previously illegal hardcore pornographic videos to be sold in sex shops.

But Mr Ferman, who has headed the board for 22 years, said: "This is not a puritanical Government, but

they are playing to the puritanical vote. These matters need to be discussed coolly and calmly over time. We have never passed anything that could have been prosecuted under obscenity laws. Mr Straw was shooting from the hip and he was wrong. Politicians tend to play to the gallery, so we will wait for him to finish and then get on with the job of sorting this out."

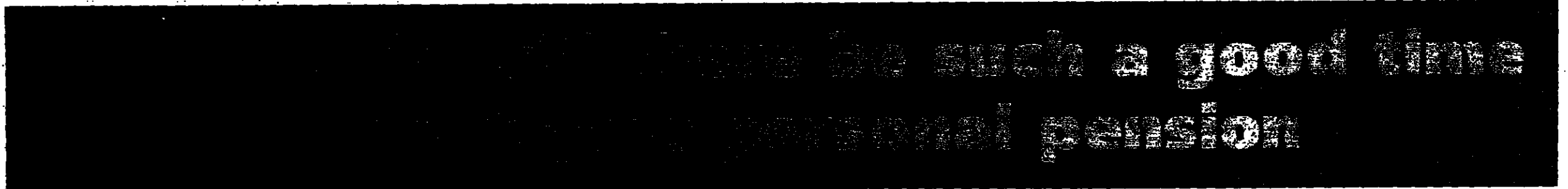
Among the first films to receive the new R18 (Restricted 18) classification were American-made *Barbarella* and *Ladies Behaving Badly*, shot in Britain. Customs and Excise officials warned the distributors that, without the new certification, they could have been liable to prosecution. The change provoked a furious letter from Mr Straw, attacking the board for its "unacceptable, unilateral decision" and personally criticising Mr Ferman.

Yesterday Mr Ferman, 67, defended the release of *Kissed*, a film about necrophilia. Directed by a Canadian, Lynne Stopkewich, it shows a woman's early obsession with burying animals turn into a fixation with the corpses of men in the mortuary where she works. Mr Ferman said: "There are no taboo

themes in cinema, only taboo treatments. In this case the portrayal is very responsible and discreet."

Andreas Whitam Smith, the founding Editor of *The Independent*, was appointed last month to lead a shake-up of the board after Mr Straw called for it to be made more publicly accountable. Mr Ferman is to remain as director and chief executive.

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Encyclopaedias online spell death of the salesman

ENCYCLOPAEDIA Britannica is to disband its direct sales force, bringing an end to the age of the foot-in-the-door book salesman and making way for compact discs and the Internet.

The last of the 230-year-old company's 70 commission-only sales staff will go in April, prompted by electronic advances which have seen an 85 per cent drop in sales of printed volumes in the 1990s. In 1991 Encyclopaedia Britannica sold 400,000 volumes worldwide, but expects to sell just 25,000 in 1998. Although Britain, traditionally more book-oriented, has fared better, it has seen a decline from 20,000 to fewer than 5,000.

The company recognises that the new generation of CD-Roms, costing a fraction of the price of a set of books, is the key to the future.

The traditional encyclopaedias range in price from £845 up to £7,000, for handbound monogrammed leather volumes made to order. But the 32-volume 1998 edition, containing 65,000 articles and 44 million words, weighs 60kg and occupies two metres of shelf space.

Launched in 1995 and costing £125, the compact disc, like its Internet companion Britannica Online, includes full colour pictures, video clip and sound, making it far more popular with the computer generation.

The company began hawking encyclopaedias on the doorstep almost 50 years ago. But after criticism during the

Stephen Farrell on how the Net and CD-Roms have written off encyclopaedias in book form

1960s over hard-sell techniques, sales teams switched to stands at shopping centres, railway stations and airports.

Tim Pethick, a company spokesman, admitted that customers felt intimidated by the idea of direct sales. He said: "There is this misperception that encyclopaedia sales people are a door-to-door force and one step lower in the food chain than used-car salesmen."

"They don't want to be bothered dealing with them. Perception is everything in the marketplace and we don't any longer want the premium encyclopaedia brand associated with this misperception."

The company jealously guards its historic sales figures, refusing to disclose how many it sold in recent decades. However, during one of its recent peaks in the 1960s, the salesforce totalled 600 and used hard-sell methods that drew complaints of over-zealous reps pretending to be market researchers to gain entry to homes.

Mr Pethick said there had been no such complaints for

years, but acknowledged a shift in attitudes. "We have to respond to fundamental changes in consumer buying patterns."

"In-home selling served us very well for many years, but today our customers want to buy in other ways. The revenues generated from in-home sales efforts no longer justify the costs."

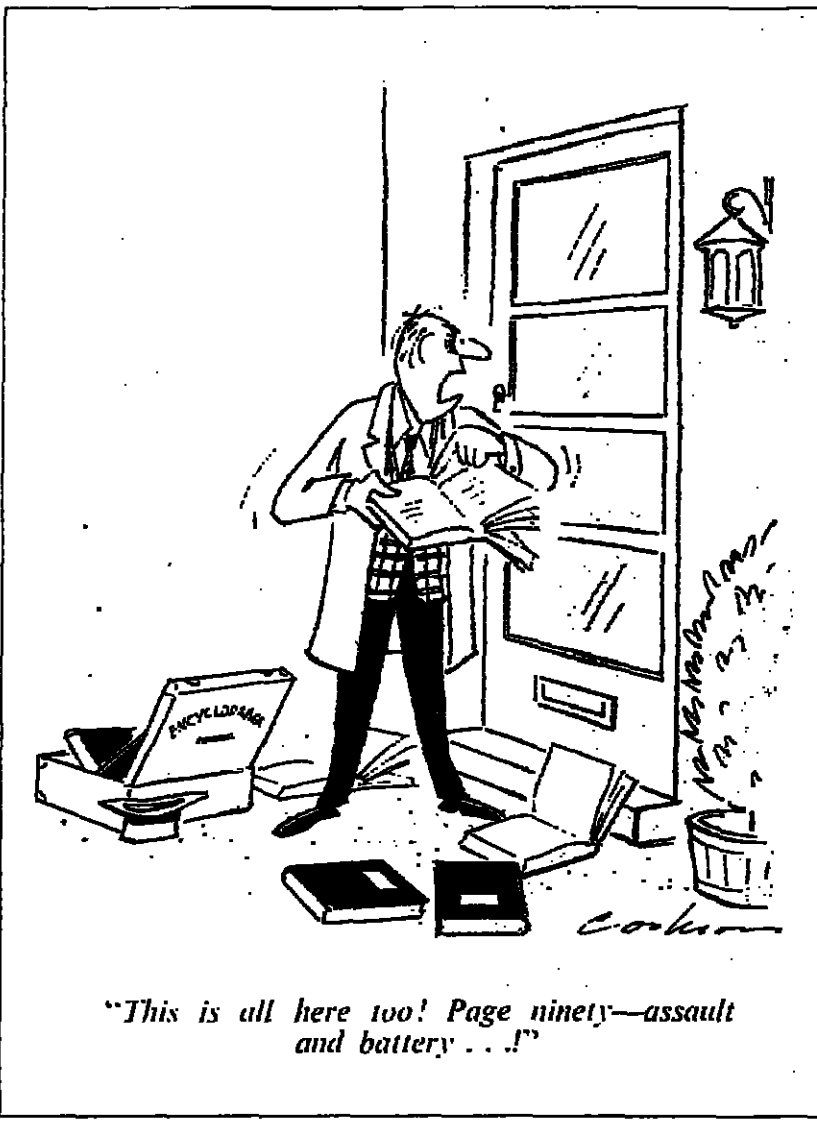
Drew Wilson, a Britannica salesman, last night lamented the end of an era. For ten years the 42-year-old former teacher from Fenwick, Strathclyde, felt pride in selling an educational product to people from all walks of life.

Although the company had moved out of door-to-door selling before he arrived, senior colleagues had long exchanged stories of hawking sample volumes from one end of a street to the other and he enjoyed pitching the £1,500 tomes to passing customers in B&Q supermarkets and airport lounges.

His career has taken him from council estate homes, with families eager to give their children a reference book, to the library of a stately home near Aviemore that was occupied by a peer's husband wearing a kilt and an artificial leg.

His easiest sale was four £1,300 leather-bound sets to a sculptor living in Spain who strolled past a stand at Heathrow airport, ordered two as an afterthought and rang back for another pair the next day.

His most unexpected was a registered blind customer in



Affectionate target in *Punch*: now it's all on the Net and CD-Rom

Balerno, near Edinburgh, who projected pages on to a closed-circuit television screen in his study that converted them into huge white letters on a black background that he could just make out.

"It is the end of an era, but there was an inevitability about it and we had to move on. They had already closed the Australian and US sales forces and, although we were told that the UK situation was very healthy, we only half believed it," Mr Wilson said.



Relations with US divert Cook from far trickier ones at home

Robin Cook was in more than usually prickly form when I saw him, as fresh stories were emerging about the breakdown of his marriage. Whatever he may feel about the remarks of his estranged wife, Margaret, he brushed aside these matters in just a sentence as being private. What really irked him were suggestions that he is restlessly ambitious and would like to become Chancellor or Prime Minister.

He claims thoroughly to enjoy being Foreign Secretary and has no wish to move, though he seems to have enjoyed Christmas speculation about becoming Scotland's inaugural First Minister. Mr Cook gives every impression of relishing his job, despite false suggestions by his enemies that he is bored. He is obviously in command of his brief and has shown considerable diplomatic skill, notably in successfully chairing the potentially divisive meeting over Iraq last November of the United Nations Security Council in Geneva.

His longstanding, long-term membership seems long in the past as Mr Cook stresses ties with America. He has formed a close working relationship with Madeleine Albright, the Secretary of State. They have a similar intellectual temperament and approach to world problems, both stressing human rights.

Mr Cook is going to Washington on Thursday, wearing his British presidency hat, accompanied by Sir Leon Brittan from the Commission. This is part of a world tour which takes in the European Parliament tomorrow, Ottawa on Friday and China next week, with Latin America and the Caribbean next month.

He rejects the Euro-sceptic view that Europe and America are somehow alternative relationships for Britain. Rather, he points to the repeated view of senior American officials that British influence and clout in Washington are directly related to our influence and clout in Brussels. In the past, he says, America was talking increasing

ly to the Germans about European developments. Mr Cook, instead, stresses Britain's traditional role as interlocutor between America and Europe—an attitude which often arouses suspicions, especially in France.

On this visit, Mr Cook will press a European role to reinforce the American-brokered peace talks. This might involve helping with security in Gaza and creating a safe trading and industrial zone in Palestinian-run areas. The European Union also has a specific role in relation to Russia where Mr Cook emphasises the need to tackle the environmental implications of the military and nuclear facilities on the Kola peninsula. Transatlantic relations are not entirely smooth. Problems exist not only over meat trade but over American laws affecting the trading activities of subsidiaries of European companies.

Mr Cook believes that differences over Iran are narrowing. He wants to concentrate on Iran's role as a sponsor of state terrorism, including the fatwa against Salman Rushdie, and on preventing the regime from acquiring weapons of mass destruction. He wants to avoid a broader trade war and to explore relations with the new Government in Tehran.

As Mr Cook admits, it is all very well talking about the supportive attitude of Ms Albright, but Congress is a different matter. As he discovered from a bruising meeting last autumn with Jesse Helms, chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, it has foreign policy views of its own.

Nonetheless, even if European-American tensions remain on several issues, Anglo-American relations are generally smooth — with agreement on continuing Nato involvement in Bosnia and on Iraq. In many ways, Mr Cook's visit is a forerunner to what is likely to be a festival of mutual congratulation when the Prime Minister goes to the White House in three weeks.

RIDDELL ON POLITICS

PETER RIDDELL

Teachers told to cut subjects and raise literacy

BY DAVID CHARTER
EDUCATION CORRESPONDENT

PRIMARY school teachers will be told today that they can cut the time spent on history, geography, art, music and PE to make more room for the three Rs.

David Blunkett, the Education Secretary, wants to enable schools to spend an hour a day each on literacy and numeracy to meet government targets.

Mr Blunkett's move will alarm subject specialists in the humanities and also

secondary schools that will have to cope with 11-year-olds who arrive with varying degrees of knowledge.

However, ministers have staked their careers on reaching target levels in the basics by the end of Labour's term of office. The proportion of children reaching level four of the national curriculum in English is meant to rise from 57 per cent in 1996 to 80 per cent by 2002. In mathematics, the proportion reaching the expected standard is supposed to rise from 55 per cent to 75 per cent during the same period. Each local authority was

last week set an individual target for literacy. Ousted, the school inspectorate, is likely to be told not to criticise primary schools that drop much of their humanities and arts teaching in favour of the core curriculum of English, mathematics and science.

Chris Woodhead, the Chief Inspector of Schools, has been among those urging ministers to ignore the previous Government's pledge that the national curriculum would not be changed until a review in 2000. Mr Blunkett will present the change as an increase in flexibility for teachers in response

to complaints that his targets are unworkable under the present system of nine national curriculum subjects plus the locally-agreed religious education syllabus.

Classroom unions are likely to welcome the proposals because they will give teachers more control over their working week. The "literacy hour" has already been recommended by the Government's Literacy Task Force and a similar commitment to mathematics is likely to be proposed later, this month after successful trials in primary schools.

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Brown revives plan to scrap child benefit for over-16s

GORDON BROWN has revived plans to scrap universal child benefit for 16 to 18-year-olds as part of the Government's proposals to concentrate welfare payments on those who need them most.

Despite strong resistance from some Cabinet colleagues, the Chancellor is determined to press on with the scheme, which would release £700 million to fund education allowances for poorer families.

In what will be seen as a double assault on the middle classes, he is also backing proposals to tax child benefit for the under-16s, a move that could be announced as early as in the March Budget. The combined effect could mean better-off mothers losing well over £1,000 a year.

Mr Brown's move coincides with the proposal for Harriet Harman, the Social Security Secretary, for an "affluence test" for a range of benefits so that they can be targeted more effectively. Options on child benefit are being drawn up for

Reforms may cost better-off mothers more than £1,000 a year, report Jill Sherman and Mark Henderson

consideration by Tony Blair's new committee on welfare. The reforms are certain to increase discontent among Labour women MPs who fear that the Government intends to undermine women's employment rights. The Prime Minister has always been less enthusiastic than Gordon Brown over reforming child benefit and before the general election Chris Smith, then Shadow Social Security Secretary, opposed the plan, a position he still holds.

More than 45 backbenchers rebelled over proposals to cut benefits for lone mothers and other MPs are confident that they would get similar backing for any plans to reduce other benefits.

Government sources confirmed yesterday that ministers were looking at four areas of universal provision to see where savings could be made. These included child benefit; the state pension; maternity

benefit and disability benefits. Ministers are looking at the options of means testing, taxing or capping any or all of these benefits, which account for two thirds of the £100 billion social security bill.

Diane Abbott, Labour MP for Hackney and Stoke Newington, attacked Ms Harman's plan to cap statutory maternity benefit for better-off working women. "I support the idea of a wider debate on reform but I am worried that one casualty of new Labour's welfare reforms will be rights for women," Ms Abbott said yesterday. She feared that if maternity benefits were cut, women would be deterred from having children or would return to work too early. She added: "If the Government stops paying maternity benefit, employers are not going to take on female workers."

Labour has traditionally resisted any moves to extend

cause resentment among middle-income families. Joanna Wade, legal officer at the Maternity Alliance, said that extending statutory maternity pay to the low-paid was welcome but capping it for higher-paid women would be a step in the wrong direction.

"We support the principle of earnings-related maternity pay without a top or a bottom limit. Well-paid women need to maintain their income during maternity just as much as the low-paid."

Charities representing the elderly said that pensioners who had paid national insurance contributions throughout their working lives would feel let down by any attack on their eligibility for state retirement pensions. Age Concern said: "Our position is that we want the basic state pension to remain the bedrock of retirement income."

"Any notion of affluence tests is a means test by another name, and as we have a contributory pension system it would be contrary to its spirit to deny anyone a state pension."



Harriet Harman: she will take part in a roadshow campaign to explain the reforms

THE PROPOSED REFORMS

CHILD BENEFIT
Eligibility: Universal, for parents of children under 16 or under 19 and in full-time education.
Rates: £11.05 a week for eldest child, £9 for subsequent children.
The £17.10 special rate for eldest child of a lone parent is to be abolished.
Number of claimants: 7 million
Total cost: £6.7 billion a year

STATUTORY MATERNITY PAY
Eligibility: Claimants must have been earning at least £82 a week, the lower earnings limit for National Insurance contributions, for a continuous period of 26 weeks.
Rates: Employers are repaid up to 90 per cent of the woman's average earnings for six weeks, then a flat rate £55.70 a week for 12 weeks. A woman paid a £1 million salary would get £18,000 for each of the first six weeks' leave.
Number of claimants: 275,000
Total cost: £485 million a year. Maternity Allowance worth a further £36 million

INCAPACITY BENEFIT
Eligibility: All those incapable of working in their usual occupation for up to 28 weeks, then those incapable of doing any work owing to illness or injury.
Rates: Between £47.10 and £62.45 a week, plus bonuses for dependants.
Number of claimants: 1.8 million
Total cost: £7.8 billion a year

RETIREMENT PENSION
Eligibility: Universal, for men over 65 and women over 60.
Rates: £62.45 a week, with supplements for dependants.
Number of claimants: 10.4 million
Total cost: £31.85 billion a year

DISABILITY BENEFIT
Eligibility: Universal, for those who are unable to work for at least 12 months.
Rates: £62.45 a week, plus bonuses for dependants.
Number of claimants: 1.8 million
Total cost: £7.8 billion a year

WIDOW'S PENSION
Eligibility: Universal, for widows aged 60 and over.
Rates: £62.45 a week, plus bonuses for dependants.
Number of claimants: 1.8 million
Total cost: £7.8 billion a year

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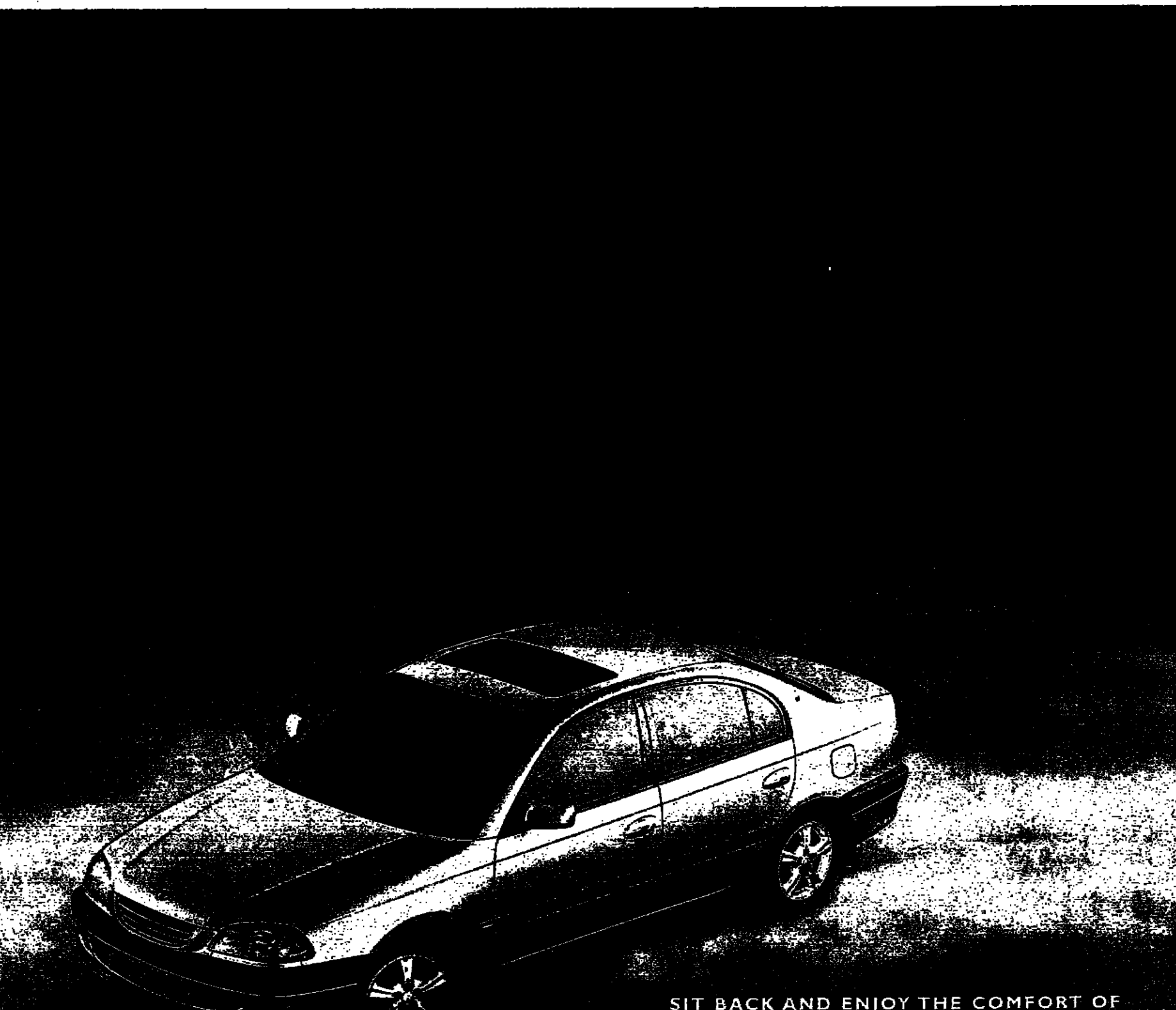
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Banned party joins calls for Algerian massacres inquiry

FROM BEN MACINTYRE IN PARIS

DOZENS of civilians have been murdered in their homes in the southeastern suburbs of Algiers, Algerian newspapers said yesterday. Exiled leaders of the banned Islamic Salvation Front (FIS) joined the chorus of demands for an investigation into the country's mounting carnage.

The latest killings took place in the suburb of Sidi Hammed, just ten miles from the centre of Algiers, as the sixth anniversary of the start of the rebel Islamic insurgency was marked by another horrific wave of bloodshed.

Local hospital staff said that more than 100 well-armed attackers had converged on Sidi Hammed, killing "dozens" of families. Unconfirmed reports said that more than 100 people had been killed and at least 70 wounded in the attack, which started with a bomb in a local cafe.

Another bomb attack and massacre were staged at the

nearby village of Haouche Sahraoui, where victims were reportedly killed at the local mosque.

The death toll at Sidi Hammed was the highest yet formally acknowledged by officials, who have consistently played down the scale of the killing.

In another sign that the Algerian Government may be slowly responding to international pressure, Mostefa Benmansour, the Interior Minister, made a rare personal visit to the scene of the massacres, according to Algerian press reports.

More than 1,000 people have been murdered in Algeria since the start of the holy month of Ramadan at the end of December.

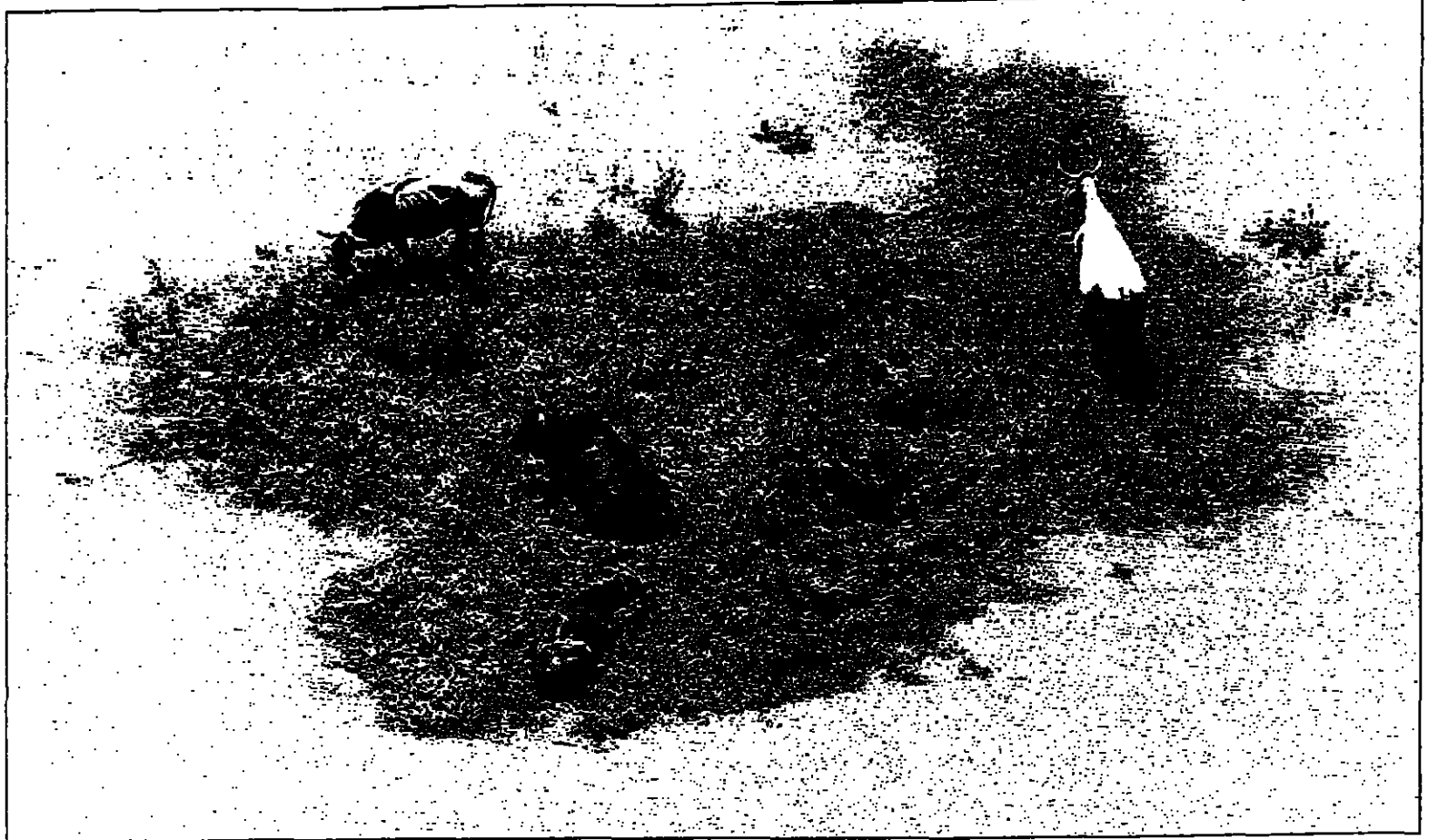
Confusion is growing over who is primarily responsible for the massacres, with militant Islamic groups and the Government accusing each other of orchestrating the car-

nage. The FIS, which was poised to win elections when they were cancelled by leaders of the military six years ago, has echoed calls from Europe and the United States for an investigation into the killings, which it blames on "death squads organised by the Government".

Algeria has agreed to allow senior European Union officials to visit the country for a discussion on "tackling terrorism", but has flatly refused to countenance an investigation by the EU into the massacres.

The FIS claims that the latest atrocities are reprisals aimed at regions which voted for the Islamic party in 1991.

However, the situation is complicated by the bitter rivalry between fundamentalist groups, government censorship and allegations that the security forces may have infiltrated the rebel groups or indeed carried out many of the killings themselves.



Livestock stranded by floodwaters near Ingham, north of Townsville, on Australia's northeast coast. Two feet of rain fell on Townsville, in Queensland, at the weekend. Floods killed one person and caused more than A\$10 million (£4 million) of damage.

Queensland hit by floodwaters

About 120 people fled their homes and 60 tourists were evacuated after a mudslide partially destroyed a resort on Magnetic Island. The national

and state governments announced emergency aid and Tim Fischer, the Deputy Prime Minister, was due to visit the city. Police found the body of

a wheelchair-bound man, 47, who drowned after his car was swept away. Another man was missing after disappearing while swimming. One man survived unscathed after being swept 3½ miles through a storm drain. (Reuters, AFP)

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WORLD IN BRIEF

Kohl shrugs off euro challenge

Bonn: Four German professors lodged a complaint against the euro in the constitutional court, ensuring that Helmut Kohl, the Chancellor, will have to fight at least until the eve of the May summit in Birmingham to keep European economic and monetary union on course (Roger Boyes writes).

"The German Government is selling something that does not belong to it," said Wilhelm Hankel, an economics professor and one of the complainants. "The mark belongs to the German people, and is the ward of the Bundesbank." Herr Kohl, who is facing re-election in September, shrugged off the challenge, as have other members of his Cabinet. "The punctual start of the euro is essential for the breakthrough to the future," he said.

Cook acts on Sierra Leone

London: Robin Cook, the Foreign Secretary, has appointed a representative to co-ordinate international efforts to return Sierra Leone to democracy (Michael Binyon writes). The move comes after Britain's promise not to recognise the military junta and to seek its removal from power by April. John Flynn is a former Ambassador to Angola. He will attend a meeting that Britain has called at the United Nations to put pressure on the Sierra Leone junta to accept the return of Ahmed Kabbah, the ousted President.

Yeltsin prepares to emerge

Moscow: President Yeltsin, right, is set to emerge from nearly two weeks of self-imposed seclusion today for a meeting with Boris Nemtsov, the First Deputy Prime Minister, his first face-to-face official contact since he went on holiday in the new year (Robin Lodge writes). The meeting comes amid intense speculation about the health of the President and the future of the Government's economic reform programme. Mr Nemtsov is a key figure in implementing that programme.



Warship lawsuit rejected

Washington: The Supreme Court has refused to revive a lawsuit against the US Government over deaths and injuries caused when the aircraft carrier USS Saratoga accidentally fired on a Turkish warship during Nato manoeuvres in 1992, killing five sailors and wounding more than 20. The court, without comment, rejected the argument by Turkish sailors that they should be allowed to sue for cash damages. (AP)

Pentagon to sack gay sailor

Washington: In the first case of its kind, the Pentagon has ordered that a US navy sailor be dismissed for violating its policy on homosexuals in the military (Tom Rhodes writes). Timothy McVeigh, 36, a senior chief petty officer on the nuclear-powered submarine, USS Chicago, and no relation to his namesake, the Oklahoma bomber, created a "user profile" on the Internet in which he designated himself as gay.

Vanuatu savers in protest

Vanuatu police fired teargas to break up a crowd of at least 500 people in Port Vila demanding to withdraw pension savings from the Vanuatu National Provident Fund and smashing the bank's windows, New Zealand radio said. A report by the ombudsman for Vanuatu, 1,200 miles northeast of Australia, linking the fund to cronyism and political corruption, prompted the unrest. The bank rejected the crowd's demands. (AP)

Netanyahu survives vote

Jerusalem: The Government of Benjamin Netanyahu, left, the Israeli Prime Minister, survived a parliamentary no-confidence vote, the first since the resignation last week by David Levy, the Foreign Minister, left hanging by a thread. Parliament rejected the no-confidence motions by a vote of 54-54, with two abstentions. The motions were brought by Labour and smaller opposition factions. It takes 61 votes in the 120-member Knesset to bring down the Government. (Reuters)



Holocaust pensions agreed

Bonn: About 15,000 Holocaust survivors will receive a monthly pension of £80 from the German Government after a landmark agreement between Bonn and Jewish groups (Roger Boyes writes). Beneficiaries will be elderly Jews in Eastern Europe, who were excluded from postwar compensation awards by Bonn. About £35 billion has been paid by Bonn since the war, almost all going to survivors in the West.

Plane drugs man jailed

Dubai: A court in the United Arab Emirates has sentenced a Swiss to four years' prison for distributing drugs to passengers of an aircraft on a transit flight to Dubai, newspapers reported. The unidentified man, 41, was arrested after the pilot of the Emirates airliner, en route to Colombia from Zurich, radioed the police about the hashish. Tests showed the defendant was drunk and he confessed he smoked hashish during the flight. (AFP)

هكذا من ان

Bubble gum's inventor dies at 93

BY TUNKU VARADARAJAN IN NEW YORK

THE man who invented bubble gum, a product that earned him tens of thousands of "thank you" letters from children but not a cent in royalties, has died aged 93.

Walter Diemer was a 23-year-old accountant for the Flier Chewing Gum Company in Philadelphia when he began testing recipes for a gum base — the part that makes gum chewy — in his free time. Some months later, in 1928, he stumbled upon the way to make bubble gum, making it pink because that was the only food colouring to hand at the time. "It was an accident," said Mr Diemer in an interview in 1996. "I was doing something else and ended up with something with bubbles."

Chewing gum was not new to America. Charles Adams, a New Yorker, began manufacturing Adams' New York Gum No. 1 in 1870. By the 1920s several companies were producing gum from chicle, a kind of sap from the sapodilla tree that had been chewed by the ancient Mayans.

Mr Diemer's invention, however, was more enjoyable by far: it stretched, it was soft, and chewers could inflate it into bubbles. The Flier Company swiftly took over the recipe and called it Double Bubble.

He helped to market the product by teaching salesmen how to blow bubbles. He did not receive any royalties but did become senior vice-president of the company, a promotion he regarded as sufficient reward.

Mr Diemer, who died in hospital near his home in Lancaster, Pennsylvania, is survived by his wife, five grandchildren, and nine great-grandchildren.

Clinton endorses Nato expansion to Baltic states

FROM TOM RHODES IN WASHINGTON AND ROBIN LODGE IN MOSCOW

PRESIDENT Clinton will sign a formal charter this week with his counterparts in Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania that definitively supports future efforts by the three Baltic nations to become members of Nato.

The document, called the Charter of Partnership, makes no promise of membership and offers no expectation that the Baltic states would be accepted during the tenure of Mr Clinton or President Yeltsin. It nevertheless displays the most formal commitment by Washington that US plans for the future of Europe are not limited to the first round of Nato expansion.

Involving a year of diplomatic legwork, in which negotiators have been well aware of concerns in Moscow and among sceptical Nato allies and senators at home, the charter embodies a political commitment to the independence and sovereignty of the three nations. Furthermore, at its most controversial, the document pledges that Washington will do everything possible to ensure that the trio are ready to join Nato.

White House aides said yesterday that they had started to brief Russian officials in Washington on the text of the document and, so far,

the response had been surprisingly quiet. While Russia has expressed no direct opposition to the charter, any suggestion that it could be a precursor to Nato membership for the Baltic states is certain to provoke anger.

The Russians have made it plain that they oppose any eastward expansion of the North Atlantic alliance, but at the same time officials accept that the future membership of former Warsaw Pact allies, such as Hungary, the Czech Republic and Poland, is inevitable. Moscow has made it plain, however, that it is vehemently opposed to the notion of any former part of the Soviet Union joining Nato and would regard the inclusion of the Baltic states as a direct threat to its security.

Any such announcement would also play into the hands of the hardline nationalist and Communist opposition, the leaders of which have already frequently accused Mr Yeltsin's administration of pandering to the West and renouncing Russia's status as a superpower.

European diplomats said they had no reservations about the strictly bilateral agreement between the US and the three small countries, whose pursuit of autonomy

had helped to speed the disintegration of the Soviet Union. "Our core concern, and one of which the Americans are well aware, is that the process of Nato enlargement enhance the security of Europe as a whole," said one diplomat. "If we push that process too far too fast, without parallel conditions with Russia, we could end up with enlargement worsening rather than enhancing European security."

In the end, membership will depend largely on how well the three countries improve relations with Moscow. That may take a decade or longer, but US officials hope that by hosting a very public ceremony, where Mr Clinton will be joined at the White House by Presidents Meri of Estonia, Urmans of Latvia and Brazauskas of Lithuania, America will be seen to be maintaining its principles.

Washington has told the Baltic states they should not expect to be part of any second round of Nato expansion, which the White House hopes to implement next year. But that will depend on the Senate and the legislatures of other Nato members, who have still to approve membership for Poland, Hungary and Czechoslovakia. A Senate vote on the issue is expected this spring.

Saddam to halt work of UN arms inspectors led by 'spy'

FROM MICHAEL THEODOULOU IN NICOSIA

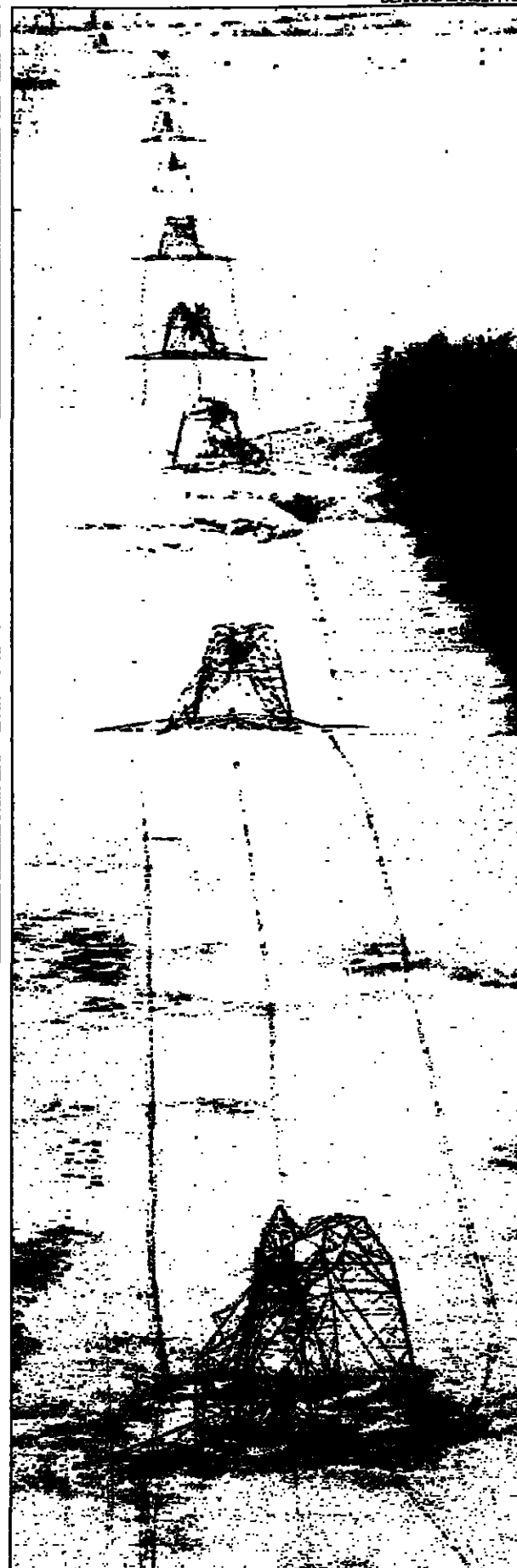
IRAQ tried to provoke a new crisis in the Gulf last night, declaring it was halting the work of a United Nations weapons inspection team headed by an American whom it accused of spying.

President Saddam Hussein said work could proceed only when the team's composition changed. The 16-member group, which includes nine Americans, five Britons, one

Russian and one Australian, arrived in Baghdad on Sunday. The ban comes days after Washington announced that it would keep a major military force, including two aircraft carriers, in the Gulf as long as Baghdad continued to block attempts to monitor Saddam's outlawed arms programmes. But dissidents said Saddam believed that America was merely sabre-rattling.

A CIA report, leaked last week, concluded Saddam had won his latest standoff over

inspections and would flout UN demands if Washington failed to exert a harsher response. "Iraq has decided to stop the work of the inspection team headed by the American, Scott Ritter, and to withdraw permission for him to undertake any activities on its territory, starting from today, until the composition of the team is with the balanced participation of the permanent Security Council member states," the Iraqi news agency said.



Electricity pylons buckled by ice storms dot the Quebec landscape. Thousands of people endured a seventh day without heat or power yesterday, as overnight temperatures plunged to -12C (10.4F)

Europeans join US bid to ban human cloning

BY TOM RHODES AND BEN MACINTYRE IN PARIS



Seed: he is considering having a clinic in Mexico

CONGRESS moved swiftly to back President Clinton's call for a ban on human cloning as the American scientist who wants to clone babies said he would transfer his experiments to another country if outlawed in the United States.

Dr Richard Seed, the physician who wants to set up a clinic in Chicago to clone babies for infertile couples, said he was considering opening a laboratory in Mexico if the process was banned by Congress.

He was speaking after Dick Arney, the House majority leader, said he intended to pass a Bill to ban cloning as soon as Congress returned from its recess later this month.

Yesterday 19 members of the Council of Europe signed an agreement in Paris to prohibit "any intervention seeking to create a human being genetically identical to any other human being, whether living or dead, by whatever means". The Council called the protocol "Europe's response to the threat" of human genetic replication.

Britain did not sign the agreement because it is an amendment to the 1996 Convention on Human Rights and Bio-Medicine, of which Britain is not part. However a spokesman at the British Embassy in Paris welcomed the latest move, noting that its principles are "already enshrined in UK law".

The spokesman added: "Britain is fully committed to the ethical points made in the convention... and was heavily involved in drafting both the convention and protocol."

Germany also did not sign the agreement in Paris, on the ground that its national legislation already bans genetic research on human embryos, a legacy of Nazi genetic experiments during the Second World War.

At the signing ceremony for the protocol, which must be ratified by signatory nations before coming into effect, President Chirac referred to the "disturbing developments" in cloning in America. The French leader was echoing leading Republicans on Capitol Hill who have rallied to President Clinton's denunciation of cloning as "untested, unsafe and morally unacceptable".

Mr Arney said: "From my point of view, God is in his heaven. He has already treated man as perfectly as he can in his own image, and we don't need a bunch of amateurs down here doing what they think they can do. It's God's business and not ours, we are going to move that ban. We should have already."

After Scottish researchers revealed they had produced Dolly, the clone of a six-year-old ewe, Mr Clinton last June sent Capitol Hill a Bill that would outlaw human cloning for at least five years.

But Congress adjourned four months later without passing any restrictive legislation. The emergence of Dr Seed, however, acted as a swift catalyst. Described as a "mad scientist" by Donna Shalala, the US Health Secretary, Dr Seed said he remained undaunted by his many critics and promised to work "off-shore" if necessary.

"I like Tijuana, Mexico," he said, despite broad repudiation by the Mexican Government to such an idea. "My target is to have a two-month pregnancy in a year and a half. It's not a difficult project."

The cloned embryo would spend its first seven months growing in a laboratory. The physician has estimated that it would cost about \$2 million (£1.2 million) for a fully operational cloning clinic and claims he will have enough money to do so.

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Suharto pledges to meet IMF's reform targets

FROM OUR CORRESPONDENTS IN JAKARTA AND HONG KONG

INDONESIA'S ailing autocratic ruler, President Suharto, bowed to mounting international pressure yesterday and promised to implement reforms to restore confidence in his country's collapsing economy.

Stanley Fischer, the International Monetary Fund's first deputy managing director, said after a meeting with Mr Suharto that he was confident the President would soon announce reforms he promised last October when Indonesia agreed a \$43 billion (£27 billion) package to bail out its economy.

The opposition meanwhile stepped up demands that Mr Suharto resign before the presidential election in March. Supporters of Megawati Sukarnoputri, the symbol of the country's opposition movement, urged President Suharto to step down and yesterday called for a "national dialogue" and the need "for a clean and respectable leadership, genuinely respected by the people" to solve the country's crisis.

Led by Kwik Kian Gie, a member of Mrs Megawati's unrecognised faction of the Indonesian Democratic Party, they said in a statement that "the aim of such dialogue is to gather the opinion of the people... The ball is now in the people's court."

Indonesia's two most prominent religious scholars, Abdurrahman Wahid and Amien Rais, who represent almost 60 million Muslims, continued their attack on the national leadership yesterday. Mr Wahid said: "Mr Suharto should have stepped down ages ago, we need different people." Mr Amien added: "It is time he resigned as this is a prerequisite to overcoming the present crisis."

Neither called their supporters out on to the streets to demonstrate against Mr Suharto and it is accepted, even in the current circumstances, that President, should he choose to run for a seventh consecutive term, would be

Economic woes have increased the pressure on Indonesia's ailing leader

lected comfortably. However, his survival hangs on the continued support of the politically divided army, which is allocated 75 of the 500 seats in the House of Representatives. In recent days Mr Suharto, who has ruled Indonesia for 32 years, has been urged by both Helmut Kohl, the German Chancellor, and Ryutaro Hashimoto, Japan's Prime Minister, to take the IMF's prescribed medicine, however tough it may be. Mr Suharto is due to meet Lawrence Summers, the US Deputy Treasury Secretary, and Goh Chok Tong, Singapore's Prime Minister, this morning.

Mr Fischer said that the most important thing was that international investors returned to Indonesia. "The confidence of outside investors

in Indonesia depends on how the Government treats the economy, and that depends on what it does in the budget and other commitments it has made to reform."

An international banker in Jakarta said that until monopolies and policies favouring the President's family were halted, the "flight to quality" would continue. "Until bastions of cronyism are ended, there is little hope of an Indonesian recovery," he said.

In Hong Kong share prices fell sharply after the bankruptcy of Peregrine Investments, one of Asia's largest investment banks. Interest rates rose again, putting further pressure on the Hong Kong dollar's peg to the US dollar.

Struggling to keep the currency peg puts the Government in a quandary. The cost of keeping it means higher interest rates and a crippled economy. But lowering rates provides speculators with the cheap funds they require to stockpile their war chests for another run of short-selling the Hong Kong dollar. The question on the minds of many analysts is: does Hong Kong have the resolve to drive the economy into recession in order to preserve the currency?

One of the unknowns in this matter is China, which has said before that it would help defend the currency peg with its more than \$120 billion in foreign exchange reserves.

That may be, but others argue that China has little political capital invested in the currency peg, a British invention. Tung Chee-hwa, the Chief Executive, needs to listen carefully to Hong Kong's tycoons, the four or five men who control the property market. Last October it was the suggestion by James Tien, the head of the Chamber of Commerce, that the currency peg may eventually need to be re-examined that precipitated the recent Hong Kong crash.

Mr Blair, Mr Santer and Ryutaro Hashimoto, the Japanese Prime Minister, said after last night's talks that the current instability in Asian financial and stock markets continued to have "considerable repercussions on the regional and global economy".

They recognised that economic conditions surrounding Japan and Europe had become closely interdependent and "had a significant impact on each other".

Mr Hashimoto had said that projected Japanese growth of 1.9 per cent next year would be generated domestically and not by exports, an EU spokesman said, a stance that had gratified the European side.

As Mr Blair was meeting senior Japanese ministers, his wife, Cherie, in her role as a QC, was being lobbied by British lawyers to support their demands on the Japanese legal establishment to abandon unfair market restrictions.

British legal firms, of which there are seven in Japan, are



Cherie Blair talks to Empress Michiko at the Imperial Palace in Tokyo yesterday. Mrs Blair has been lobbied by British lawyers in Japan

Tokyo urged to lead Asia in market revamp

FROM PHILIP WEBSTER, POLITICAL EDITOR, IN TOKYO

TONY BLAIR yesterday led European Union demands on Japan to prevent Asia's financial crisis spreading to Europe.

A summit of leaders of the EU and Japan was held against the background of renewed turbulence on the markets, with the Nikkei in Japan falling to a new two-and-a-half-year low.

Jacques Santer, the European Commission President, called on Japan to raise domestic demand and promote deregulation to reduce its trade surplus. "We have to insist that Japan puts priority on boosting domestic demand, not just from a European Union perspective, but also for the Asian region."

Sir Leon Brittan, the Commission Vice-President, suggested there would be more understanding about Japan's

desire to increase exports if it expanded internal demand and deregulated its economy.

Mr Blair, attending the summit as current President of the EU when news of the latest Hong Kong crash reached Tokyo, said Japan had an important role to play in persuading other crisis-hit Asian economies of the need for proper measures to ensure financial stability.

"Japan, by setting an example to the others of the need for changes to the regulatory and financial system, can show them the right way to do it," Mr Blair said.

A joint statement by Mr Blair, Mr Santer and Ryutaro Hashimoto, the Japanese Prime Minister, said after last night's talks that the current instability in Asian financial and stock markets continued to have "considerable repercussions on the regional and global economy".

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British legal firms, of which there are seven in Japan, are

unable to employ lawyers who are Japanese or advise on Japanese law even though Japanese companies in Britain can use lawyers who are British.

According to the British Chamber of Commerce in Japan, this puts British companies at a severe disadvantage, as does the rule that prevents foreign lawyers practising in Japan until they have served at least five years in their own countries.

Mrs Blair yesterday met lawyers and students at a British Council reception and they urged her to back their case for a more open system. A leading British trade source said: "This is of enormous importance to businessmen here, particularly those who operate in several countries. We hope both the Blairs can help us."



Blair: wants to shelter Europe from Asia crisis



Suharto: President of Indonesia for 32 years

Anatole Kaletsky, page 18
Leading article, page 19
Law, page 37

Beijing hails a new era of honesty on unemployment

THERE are two new greetings in China today replacing the old *Ni hao?* (How are you?), according to sections of the official state media, which has had in the past a political culture of reporting only the good news.

The new greetings are "Have you been laid off yet?" and "Are you re-employed yet?" and they are found in many places in China, especially in industrial centres such as the smoke-stack region of the northeast, formerly Manchuria, home to many moribund state-run enterprises, the official *China Daily* said.

The phrases describe China's not-so-bright employment prospects for workers in many parts of China during the past year, the paper added with surprising frankness.

Even official statistics say 10 million people have been laid off from state enterprises, and there is virtually no social security safety net, unlike the "iron rice bowl" of basic cradle-to-grave state care in Mao's time. An additional 120 million former peasants are thought to be roaming the cities searching for work or doing labouring jobs on building sites, and it is feared that any economic downturn would deprive them of even this work.

Beijing-based diplomats say the new franker reporting in some cases indicates that some elements in the secrecy-shrouded clique at the head of the Communist Party have decided to prepare the masses for repercussions from Asia's

The impact of Far Eastern economic turmoil could hold back growth in China, James Pringle reports

market crisis. So far, Beijing claims that the financial turbulence has not affected Chinese markets.

At the same time, other newspapers have continued to insist the economy has rarely been in better shape, even as the Hong Kong stock market continues its downward spiral.

There seems to be an element at the top of the Government that does not want complacency to be the rule.

Yesterday, the state media quoted an eminent economist as ruling out currency devaluation — the insulated yuan is largely unconvertible on the world market — and proclaim growth was on track for 8 per cent this year. This is down from Beijing's normal cracking pace, but still healthy, according to the optimistic view.

Yet diplomats say a more searching scrutiny of the figures shows just how vulnerable China is to the Asian crisis. A government think-tank has said the country's economic growth could slow to a worryingly low 6 per cent this year — on the "margin of disaster", according to one view. This figure seems to

indicate there is less than consensus in the leadership on the implications of the Asian contagion, envoys say. "There seems to be an element at the top of the Chinese Government that does not want complacency to be the rule," said one Beijing-based envoy. Some people think that this

confidence when his term may begin with a downturn," said one foreign economic attaché.

As most inward investment is attracted to the export-driven coastal regions, any slowdown could have an effect on inland areas of China, like the vast province of Sichuan, where some recent demonstrations have been reported, and the northeast, where a sullen attitude prevails in cities, such as Harbin, in job-strapped Heilongjiang province.

Last week, there were protests by 30,000 laid-off factory workers in the huge central Chinese city of Wuhan, the key rail junction on the Yangtze River.

Even among workers in Beijing, there is a mood of gloomy resignation about job prospects.

"Whether or not you are likely to be laid off is a major topic among the Chinese," said a Beijing resident this week.

Although China has repeatedly said it would not devalue its currency, staff in some Beijing ministries openly talk about such a possibility, given that some other Asian currencies have fallen by 80 per cent.

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Proud nation bows to growing world pressure for contrition



Akihito: due to visit Britain this spring

EXPRESSING contrition for Japan's wartime role goes against the grain for Ryutaro Hashimoto, the Prime Minister, a conservative who personally refutes the idea that his country was responsible for the war in the Far East.

He made his feelings clear in 1993, when Morihiro Hosokawa, then Prime Minister, ended nearly half a century of denial about Japanese atrocities. Mr Hashimoto, then a senior policymaker in the dominant Liberal Democratic Party, criticised Hosokawa for describing Japan as fighting a "war of aggression".

Since taking office two years ago, Mr Hashimoto has lamented to his

Ryutaro Hashimoto, the Japanese Prime Minister, has struggled to craft sufficient expressions of regret over the war without humiliating his own nation, Robert Whyman reports from Tokyo

associates that as Prime Minister he can no longer follow his conscience and pay homage at the Yasukuni Shrine in Tokyo, an emotive symbol of Japan's military past. The hardest part of holding office, he has complained privately, is crafting expressions of regret for the war to satisfy Asian neighbours without humiliating the Japanese nation. In

1996 he became the first Prime Minister from the conservative, long-ruling, Liberal Democratic Party to express remorse to Asian war victims. Last year, on the 52nd anniversary of the end of the Second World War, Mr Hashimoto bowed to pressure from China and Korea and voiced "deep remorse".

But, in common with other Japa-

nese leaders since the war, the Prime Minister holds that the Pacific War was a justified response to economic strangulation by Western powers. Despite some concessions to Chinese and Korean pressure, school textbooks here continue to play down, or omit, wartime atrocities.

With Emperor Akihito due to visit Britain this spring, government leaders calculated that an apology by Mr Hashimoto would mollify Britain and shield the Emperor from further criticism for a war in which his father, Hirohito, played a dominant role. But the Prime Minister's powers will have a hollow ring for former British POWs seeking an

acknowledgement of Japan's guilt in the Pacific War, and compensation for their suffering.

The Japanese language is said to have 50 ways of saying sorry. The commonest term — *sumimasen* — is all but meaningless, a ritual expression even used by customers in a shop to express regret for "disturbing" the shopkeeper. Japanese tend to apologise for form's sake, without signalling genuine contrition.

However, this does not make it any easier for the ultra-conservatives who have ruled this country for most of the postwar years to swallow their pride and admit that Emperor Hirohito's armies acted harshly towards the enemy.

Chinese dissident meets Cook's deputy

By MICHAEL BRYSON, DIPLOMATIC EDITOR, AND JONATHAN MURSKY

DEREK FATCHETT, a junior Foreign Office minister, yesterday spent half an hour in talks with Wei Jingsheng, China's most prominent dissident, who was refused a chance to meet Robin Cook, the Foreign Secretary, last week.

Mr Fatchett told him that Britain was disappointed at the conditions set when he was released from jail in November, and remained "concerned" about those who were still detained.

Beijing has insisted that Mr Wei is still a criminal, and that he was released on "medical parole". It said that Mr Wei may not engage in political activity, and strongly objected to his meeting President Clinton.

The minister said Britain often raised the cases of detained dissidents in meetings with the Chinese authorities, and that Mr Cook would do so again when he arrives in Beijing next week.

The Foreign Office insisted that a full diary, rather than fear of annoying Beijing, was the reason why Mr Cook could not see Mr Wei before setting off for Beijing and Hong Kong.

Mr Wei said later that Mr Fatchett had listened to him sympathetically and that he knew the minister was personally concerned with human rights in China. "I really know this. But he doesn't have any real power. That is probably why he was told to see me," he said.

Mr Wei had told Mr Fatchett that the Western policy of conducting diplomacy with Beijing behind closed doors "plays right into the hands of the Chinese Communist Party. They don't want to improve human rights and they know that if everything is conducted secretly they can never be held accountable."

"That is why the interests of neither the Chinese nor Western peoples are being looked after."

He insisted that Western businessmen should understand that China was not going to enter a period of economic crisis in the future. "It is in one right now." This could lead to great violence inside China.

"But by helping authoritarian governments, such as China, with military and economic assistance, to get over their crisis, without demanding political change, the West is helping to prop up authoritarian governments all over the world," Mr Wei said.

Blair wins Japanese apology over POWs

THE whole Japanese Government apologised yesterday for the sufferings of British prisoners in the Second World War, during a meeting between Ryutaro Hashimoto, the Prime Minister, and Tony Blair.

Although the wording of the official apology was similar to the written declaration made in 1995 by the previous Japanese Prime Minister in advance of the 50th anniversary of VJ-Day, Mr Blair said it was "a very significant step forward".

In the 1995 apology, Tomiichi Murayama, Mr Hashimoto's predecessor, did not have the backing of his Government when he wrote to John Major expressing remorse. That year, some members of the Tokyo Government made a publicised visit to the shrine of Japan's war dead to show their disapproval.

Mr Hashimoto yesterday told Mr Blair that the whole Japanese Government backed the "heartfelt apology" and "deep remorse" over the suffering of British POWs.

However, Mr Blair failed to win any promise from the Japanese Government to meet the former prisoners' demands for £14,000 to be paid to each one. Instead, Mr Hashimoto offered a new "reconciliation package" designed to promote a closer understanding between the peoples of the two countries.

The package involves a joint pilgrimage by British and Japanese veterans to the old battlefields and cemeteries in South-East Asia, funded by both governments; a programme of year-long scholarships at Japanese schools for the grandchildren of British POWs; and the programme of visits to war graves in Japan to be doubled to 100 a year. The extra contribution from Japan for the reconciliation programmes will increase the annual payments from about £600,000 to £800,000. Mr

The Hashimoto Cabinet has failed to placate British veterans, report Philip Webster and Michael Evans

Blair said: "What has happened is that the Japanese have issued an official apology. They have expressed remorse for what happened and, as a sign of that remorse, they have agreed substantially to increase the payment into the reconciliation programme."

The new apology and financial package, announced as part of the preparations for the state visit to Britain of Emperor Akihito in May, were firmly rejected by the leading POW organisation. Arthur Tither-

ington, the chairman of the Japanese Labour Camps Survivors' Association, which has 10,000 members, including widows of POWs, criticised the Tokyo Government for using the same words as the 1995 statement, which he claimed did not amount to a proper apology.

Mr Hashimoto used the word *owabi* when apologising, and Mr Titherington said this was a relatively weak expression. A much stronger



word, he said, was *shazai* which meant humble apologies for sins committed. Similarly, Mr Hashimoto spoke of *hansei* when referring to Japan's remorse. But the much stronger word for remorse, he said, was *hizigo*.

Mr Titherington said: "These weaker words were used in 1995. The Japanese Government must think we are very stupid if they believe we don't notice these things after all this time."

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Mr Titherington said: "These weaker words were used in 1995. The Japanese Government must think we are very stupid if they believe we don't notice these things after all this time."

He said he could give no

guarantees that his members would not be demonstrating against Emperor Akihito during his state visit.

He said: "The Japanese have refused to offer the compensation we are demanding because they say it will open the floodgates. But who made the floods?" He described the financial package as an "insult".

The Japanese Government made its announcement yesterday partly because of the

fear of a repeat of the scenes in London in 1971 when the present Emperor's father, Emperor Hirohito, was met with silence by crowds lining the streets.

The British Government, keen to develop economic and trade links with Japan, also wants to avoid such an embarrassment. Mr Blair told Mr Hashimoto that it was an issue that "continues to cause very strong emotions in Britain".

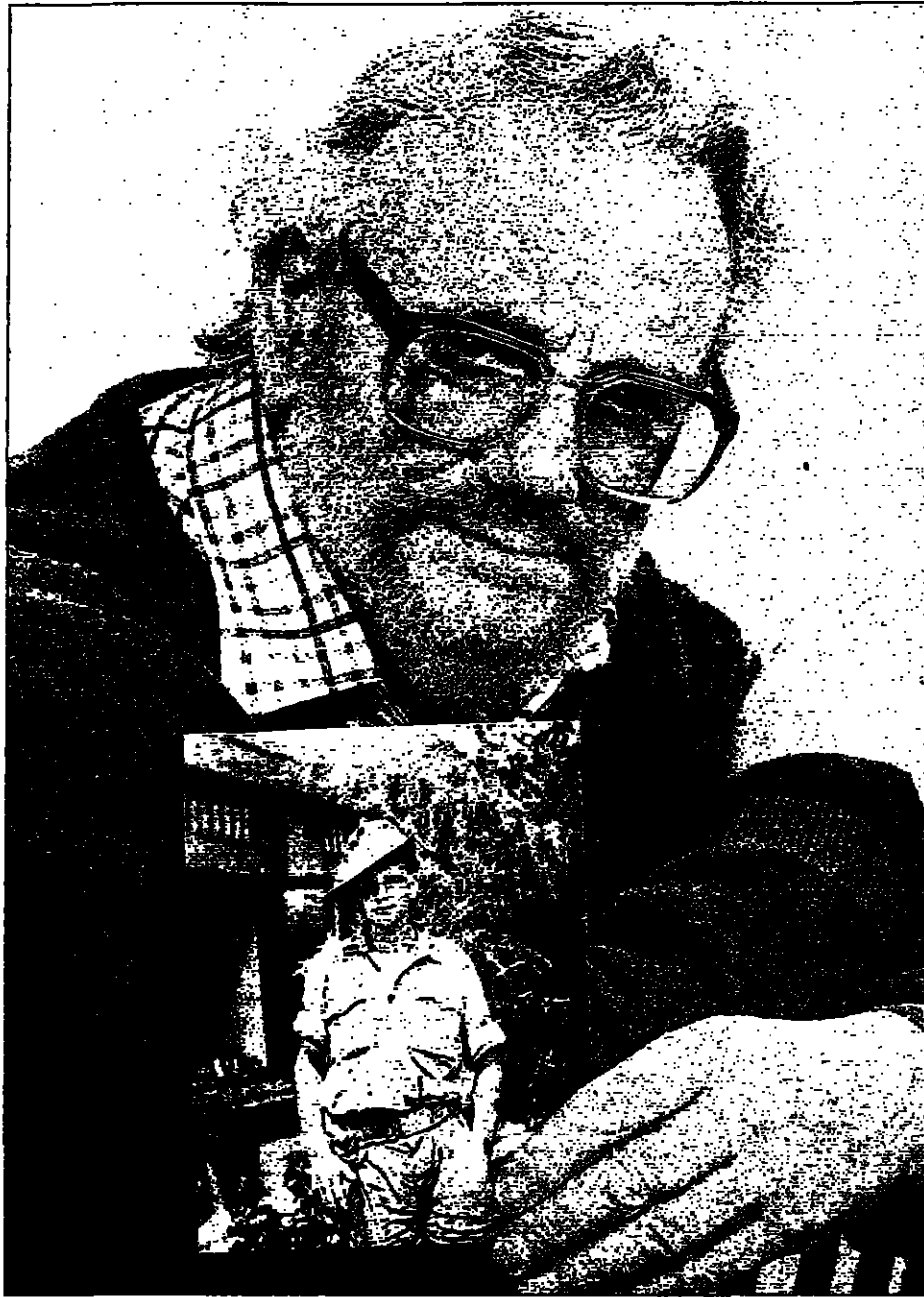
The Government is not expected formally to draw a line under the issue. Mr Blair later talked about the hope that "while people would never forget, we would be able to focus on the things that tie us together".

Within hours of the apology being issued, at least one official in Tokyo appeared to play down its significance. At a news conference at the Japan-European Union summit, Mutsuyoshi Nishimawa, the director-general of the European and Oceania Affairs Bureau of the Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs, said: "What the Prime Minister mentioned was basically no different from what Prime Minister Murayama mentioned in 1995."

However, the Royal British Legion said last night it welcomed the apology. "The difference between this apology and the one in 1995 is that this was an official expression of remorse made with the backing of the Japanese Government," a spokesman said.

War toll: More than 12,000 British POWs died out of about 67,000 who were imprisoned in the Far East during the Second World War. More than 61,000 British, Dutch, Australian and American POWs were employed on the Burma-Thailand Railway and the three main war cemeteries along the railway line contain about 12,600 graves.

Leading article, page 19



Arthur Titherington, with a photograph of himself in Singapore during the war

Battle continues in Tokyo court

By MICHAEL EVANS

THE fight for justice and compensation by the British prisoners of war who suffered at the hands of their Japanese captors began in 1946 during a brief meeting between one of the POWs and Anthony Eden. Arthur Titherington, now 76 and chairman of the Japanese Labour Camps Survivors' Association, asked Eden, the

former Foreign Secretary and Secretary of War, to seek compensation from Japan for the POWs. Eden refused because, he said, Japan had no money for compensation.

The Japanese authorities have insisted that the San Francisco peace treaty, which was signed in 1951, absolves them of further claims.

Mr Titherington, from Witney, Oxfordshire, took his

case to the Japanese courts three and a half years ago to claim £14,000 compensation as an individual which, he claimed, was not covered by the San Francisco treaty.

The next crucial date is February 19, supposedly the last court hearing in Tokyo before the judges give their verdict. Mr Titherington expects the judgment in the next two months.

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سكز لمن لإصل

Would a scan have saved our baby son?

I want all parents to know about hypoplastic left heart syndrome - a rare heart malformation that will kill any baby within three days of birth, but which is not usually diagnosed until it is too late.

On Tuesday, October 14, our son Xander was born. My wife, Zoe, and I were the proud parents of a seemingly healthy baby boy, who weighed 8lb 4oz. Xander and Zoe were kept in the maternity ward overnight and sent home the next day. Xander was well and seemed very aware of his surroundings.

On Thursday, October 16, we took Xander to have his birth registered. We noticed that his breathing had become heavy, but he slept well in the car. During that evening he slept, but his breathing was still laboured. At around 11pm he started to cry and would only stop when we picked him up. He did not need changing or feeding, but when we put him back in his carrycot he started to cry again. Zoe called the hospital's 24-hour telephone line and a midwife told her not to worry, that babies did have erratic breathing, but to ring again if he seemed to get worse.

It continued and Xander would not stop crying when we put him down. When I held him, he stopped, but then he began to make an unusual noise instead. I held him for several hours throughout the night. He started to become cold, so I wrapped him in his blanket. The noise that he made when breathing continued.

By 4am on Friday, October 17, we realised that it was something more serious than just a cold, so Zoe called the hospital and explained the situation. A midwife arrived at our home a few minutes later. She gave Xander oxygen and called for an ambulance, which arrived quickly. Xander was taken to the children's

Ultrasound might have alerted **Jasen Quick** to the fact that Xander had a malformed heart



Xander Quick lived only three days because of a heart defect

unit at Musgrove Park hospital in Taunton, Somerset.

My wife and I watched as paediatricians and nurses connected Xander to drips and machines. After an hour and a half we were asked to sit in a lounge while they connected Xander to a ventilator to control his breathing.

We waited for more than two hours and were then met by the consultant paediatrician, who told us that they were trying to stabilise Xander. She said that he might have a heart lesion, and that she had arranged for an ambulance to take Xander to the cardiac unit at the children's hospital in Bristol. In the meantime, she added, they

were trying to make him stable enough to travel.

By 10am my wife and I were able to see our son again. The doctor told me that he was very ill, which I interpreted as meaning that he would probably die. He looked helpless as he lay on the bed and my wife and I were shocked when one of the machines started to sound an alarm. A nurse assured us that the machines were nothing to worry about and turned the alarm off.

Zoe turned away, just as the nurse started to shout "Cardiac!". I pushed Zoe out of the room, hoping she had not heard. As we left, I turned and saw the doctor pressing his fingers on to our son's chest,

trying to keep his heart beating. At that moment I knew that Xander was not going to live.

Zoe and I stayed near by and regularly went to look at our son. His heart stopped three more times and the consultant paediatrician told me that he might not make it to the ambulance, let alone Bristol. The build-up of blood caused by his heart stopping had damaged his liver and it was no longer functioning properly.

By midday, the doctors had been unable to stabilise Xander. At 12.20pm his heart stopped and would not start again. A cardiac doctor from Bristol was on site for other reasons and had been called to the children's unit to see Xander. The consultant paediatrician told us that the cardiac doctor would not be able to start Xander's heart again and that she could only diagnose what was wrong with him. Then he would die.

She then asked me whether we wanted them to continue to massage his heart until the cardiac doctor arrived, or whether we wanted them to stop and let him die. I told them to keep going, in the hope that the cardiac doctor might be able to start his heart again, even though, deep down, I realised that there was no hope left. The paediatricians took it in turns to massage his heart to keep his blood flowing.

The cardiac doctor brought with her a large ultrasound scanner, with which she examined Xander's heart. After a few minutes of looking at the screen, she explained that the left-hand side of his heart had not formed properly and that nothing could be done. Xander was disconnected from the machines, and died.

The room was then quickly cleared of doctors and Xander was given to Zoe and me to hold. He felt warm and seemed to be asleep. I had to ask the doctor whether he was actually dead, even though he was obviously not breathing. We sat with him for a while and said our goodbyes. Within four days I had gone from crying with overwhelming joy at the beginning of my son's life to weeping in utter sadness at its end. Our other son, Jeran, 3, was too young to understand that his new baby brother, whom he had adored, would not come home again.



Jasen and Zoe Quick with Jeran, 3, who was "too young to understand his baby brother would not come home again"

The registrar paediatrician said Xander had had hypoplastic left heart, which meant the left-side of the organ had not formed properly. He explained that the left-hand side pumped blood around the body and the right-hand side of the heart pumped blood around the lungs. At birth

there is a duct or "hole" that links the two sides. In Xander's case, however, the duct had allowed the right-hand side to pump blood around both his body and lungs. After two days, though, the duct closed, and that is what had caused Xander to become ill. His heart had stopped pumping blood around his body but continued to pump it to his lungs.

We buried our son on November 1, 1997, having arranged the funeral ourselves. We did not hire an undertaker because my wife and I wanted to do as much for Xander as we could, right up to the

moment I put his coffin in the ground. Hypoplastic left heart syndrome can develop in any child, no matter how healthy the parents of family history. (We have since discovered that although scanning unborn babies for abnormalities is common practice, our health authority does not usually do it. The Taunton and Somerset Trust scans only to estimate the date babies will be born, unless there are "specific reasons" for a more detailed scan.)

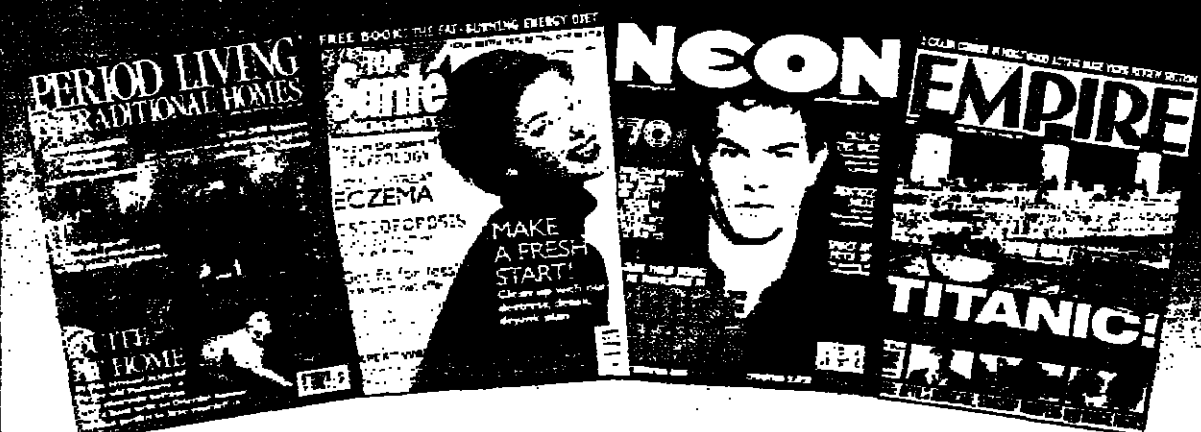
There were none in my wife's pregnancy, yet if an ultrasound scanner had been used to look for abnormalities,

I would welcome correspondence from other parents who have lost children, either through hypoplastic left heart or other reasons, or anyone who would like to know more about the condition that caused our son to have such a short life.

The nurse shouted 'Cardiac!'; I pushed Zoe from the room

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CHANGING TIMES

Drug that tells its own story

Patients who tend to look forlornly at the bottles of antidepressants in their medicine chest should take heart from the story of Britain's most popular and successful novelist - Dame Catherine Cookson.

Dame Catherine spent time in a mental hospital and, despite a prolonged course of ECT, finally recovered her equilibrium only when she returned to stricken Tyneside and wrote and rewrote her own life story into dozens of novels.

Her life was recently portrayed in a TV documentary. The producer does not appear to share present scientific doubts about the importance of nurture in the development of a person's character and mental stability. Perhaps Dame Catherine's genetic background does have flaws that may have played a part in the establishment of her literary reputation but, if so, they were not stressed.

Antidepressant drugs were not available when Dame Catherine was having treatment. But if Edronax rebovetine was then being marketed, she might have made a complete recovery and may never have been encouraged to take her writing seriously by returning to the North East, which was her inspiration.

Catherine Cookson was, judging by her photographs and by all contemporary accounts, an unusually attractive girl, ambitious and with a

lively intelligence. She suffered from being the illegitimate child of a liaison between a heavy-drinking chambermaid and a richer, older, but errant lover who disappeared after her conception.

Catherine was brought up

MEDICINE CHEST

DR THOMAS STUTTAFORD

by her grandmother and a drunken, illiterate but good-hearted grandfather. Unfortunately, the happiness engendered by the rough but comforting world of her grandparents was shattered by her discovery that she was illegitimate and her subsequent ostracism by her equally down-trodden and deprived neighbours.

The death of her grandfather and later the defection of her first and beloved boyfriend, who like the absentee father was older but more socially adept, completed her desolation.

Most antidepressants aim either to increase levels of serotonin or adrenaline and by whatever chemical device they raise appreciably the level of one or other of these chemicals, Edronax, which has recently been introduced,

selectively raises the levels of noradrenalin available at the synapses in the central nervous system without affecting the serotonin levels.

It is claimed that when patients take it they avoid the side effects of the serotonin reuptake inhibitors and also cheer up more quickly than with other antidepressants. When successful the patients soon lose the well-described depressive symptoms, irritability, insomnia (in particular early morning waking), loss of enthusiasm, feelings of weightlessness and loss of appetite. Edronax, because of its specific action on noradrenalin levels, is thought to restore the patients' previous social adaptability so that they regain their previous snap, crackle and pop. It is said that

they not only look and feel better, as they would have done after taking the standard antidepressants, but become so well and confident that they are able to face their chairman or a difficult client.

No doctor would deny that many depressed patients recover with treatment to a reasonable extent. However, some do not regain their old personality and may even be in danger of becoming heart-sink patients, the surgery regulars for whom there is little hope. If Edronax does succeed in giving the formerly depressed patient that little bit of extra enthusiasm, its place in the medicine chest is guaranteed, but the bookshelves of any future Cookson might remain empty as the wage-slave returns happily to work.

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ARTS

The Turner Prize winner wears her art on her sleeve.

Arts, Pages 34-35

DOUG LONEMAN



Public faces and private lives: Jane Fonda is giving up her acting career for the role of Proper Wife to television tycoon, Ted Turner. Margaret Cook (below), made sacrifices for her marriage but still lost her husband, Robin

The perils of being a Proper Wife

days when a woman has a pretty clear idea of it took to be a Proper Wife. She did life seem as neat as a suburban dolly? Our man, he down for usually, bend-over-backward to get the reward years of, well, standing by.

... that a mishmash of g super women has sed their sisters to uned potato from their d Get A Life.

... the marital bound- ten blurred, the rule d into a latex concept ch every which way to inualities. A wife these k if she wants to, earn er spouse, refuse to ;s, cook nothing but ; and even decide that ant to ruin her figure children. A wife then, ich her own woman, 'oper Wife?

... ten Jane Fonda to of the wife's more hies. Miss Fonda, wear formed part of re-burning pyre, now she is giving up her cress to be — yes — a The twice-divorced

star has said that she is turning her back on Hollywood because it is too tough on relationships and because she has found happiness simply by being the wife of Ted Turner, the television tycoon.

"I knew that if I didn't have a happy marriage I was going to die regretting it," she explained.

More hot air from Times Town perhaps? Maybe not. What is interesting about Miss Fonda, now 60, is that, like many women of her generation (and the next one down) she has sampled any number of ways of being and doing.

She has been a sex kitten in *Barbarella*, a Vietnam peacenik, she has been through two failed marriages (to the moviemaker, Roger Vadim, and the Californian politician, Tom Hayden.) And now she has come back to the basics of wifedom with her beloved Mr Turner.

While there can be no doubt that Miss Fonda has done this from choice, her new *modus operandi* also reflects a trend which is becoming increasingly noticeable in younger generations. Given that unnumberable 30 and 40-something women carved out their careers first and their emotional and family lives second, it is no wonder that their daughters have noticed that

Many women feel that precious few wives benefit from being the perfect uncomplaining spouse, says Daphne Lockyer

... who knows the woman behind the jokes.

But whether Miss Brand will make a great wife, or even a Proper Wife, remains to be seen. And if she is contemplating this status, she may already have concluded that there are precious few examples of modern women who have benefited from the Proper Wife philosophy.

It can not have escaped her attention that Margaret Cook, for example, has been — in terms of convention at least — the perfect uncomplaining matrimonial partner. For 28 years, she developed an impressive career as a consultant haematologist and made sacrifices to support her husband's political career. She bore him two sons and remained in Scotland to care for them while her husband came to Westminster in pursuit of a Cabinet job. She also says that he has had a series of affairs.

Now in her fifties, her reward for her devotion is to see her husband, the Foreign Secretary, shackled up



with his mistress, Gaynor Regan. There is little comfort for her in the cliché of Regan being Cook's secretary. Younger, blonder, and so on. And though we may smile at the nerve of a man who declares "I am going to get married as soon as I get divorced", for Margaret this is not a laughing matter.

constituency. To add insult to injury, Wray and his mistress, Laura Walker, expect a baby in July.

All that stands in the way of his remarriage are the findings of an industrial tribunal, at which his wife has claimed unfair dismissal, and, divorce. According to her husband, Catherine is seeking "the moon and the stars", though doubtless she would have preferred the moon and the stars in her marriage rather than through divorce. And that is the mythology that the Proper Wife cleaves to.

In Hollywood, where they love myths and happy endings, Jane Fonda is the heroine of her own epic. Her new role as a Proper Wife can only delight the audience. But will it delight Ted Turner who, one presumes, married her for rather different qualities than those encouraged in the Proper Wife — her smartness, her independence and her ability to give as good as she gets.

Perhaps in the end she will recall the words of Robert Louis Stevenson, who said: "Marriage is like life in this — that it is a field of battle and not a bed of roses."

In other words, be a Proper Wife if you like. But remember that there is also a certain allure in being the trouble and strife.

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High stakes in Oprah's cow row

THOUSANDS of cars, pick-up trucks and tractors across the vast cattle belt of Texas now sport a no-nonsense sticker on their fenders: "The only mad cow around here is Oprah Winfrey." In redneck bars and cowboy hangouts in the Lone Star state, Ms Winfrey's name is mud.

One good 'ol boy said on television of the talk-show star: "Well, that Oprah may never eat beef again, but she sure as hell is gonna eat her words."

These stirrings stem from a bizarre lawsuit in which Ms Winfrey is being sued for \$7 million (£4.4 million) under the state's False Disparagement of Perishable Food Products Act, also known as the "veggie libel law". In parts of America you can be sued for bad-mouthing beef.

The suit has been brought by angry cattle ranchers who claim that an Oprah programme last year about mad cow disease caused the beef industry to lose millions of dollars. The episode featured a former cattle-rancher-turned-vegetarian-activist's lurid warnings. "You said mad cow disease could make AIDS look like a common cold?" a stunned Ms Winfrey had exclaimed. "Absolutely," said the activist, a member of the Humane Society of the United States.

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Another fine mess Japan's got Asia into

Only a U-turn by Tokyo can stop meltdown, says Anatole Kaletsky

When the history is written of the great depression which threatens to make a wasteland of the "miracle" economies of Asia, one man is likely to be identified either as the bumbling culprit behind the disaster or as the hero who pulled an entire continent back from the brink of political and social collapse. That man is Ryutaro Hashimoto, the Prime Minister of Japan.

Mr Hashimoto, a forceful, well-meaning and popular politician, is destined to be remembered as either the Herbert Hoover or the Franklin Roosevelt of the 1990s. The Asian crisis may have impoverished such once-proud countries as Korea, Malaysia and Thailand. It may have achieved in a single month what decades of bloody guerrilla warfare has failed to do in undermining the thirty-year dictatorship of Indonesia's General Suharto. It may even transform the Chinese takeover of Hong Kong from a political triumph into an economic nightmare. But what has all this to do with Japan? Japan's economic policies were responsible for the unstoppable chain reaction set off by what should have been a

plunge in the Japanese stock market, and the next spin of the vicious circle.

Japan's economic dominance over Asia ensures that it will keep spinning until Mr Hashimoto announces a clear change in his tax policy. As long as the Japanese Government continues to dice with economic depression, there can be little hope of stabilising Indonesia, Korea or Hong Kong, regardless of whether their Governments obey the injunctions of the IMF or of whether their economies are "internationally competitive" and "fundamentally sound". When an economy is in the grip of financial panic, its "fundamentals" are irrelevant. America has, for 100 years, been the most powerful and competitive economy in human history. This did not prevent America from suffering years of depression, mass unemployment and even starvation in the early 1930s—and eventually sucking Europe and Asia into chaos and war.

Although the outlook today is not remotely as dire as it was in the 1930s, Japan plays a dominant role in Asia comparable to the one America then occupied and still occupies in the world as a whole.

Hashimoto made the worst tax hike since the 1930s

This is why the diplomatic event of real economic consequence this week is not the trip by American officials to Indonesia. It is the return to Tokyo from Washington of Eisuke Sakakibara, the permanent secretary for international affairs in Japan's Ministry of Finance. Mr Sakakibara, the most internationally-minded official to have reached the pinnacle of the Japanese bureaucracy, decided to go to Washington last week to reinforce the message that he has been preaching to Mr Hashimoto. Japan must accept primary responsibility for resolving the Asian crisis and this can be done only if the Government performs an embarrassing economic policy U-turn. Only then will the US Administration offer public support for Japan's efforts to stabilise the yen.

Mr Hashimoto, however, is still in the grip of an atavistically conservative faction in the Ministry of Finance, led by Takeshi Komura. Mr Sakakibara's traditionalist rival, who heads the Ministry of Finance Budget Bureau. It may be hard to believe that the future stability of Asia and the prosperity of the world economy now may depend on the outcome of a byzantine intrigue. But that seems to be the only way the Japanese political system can operate.

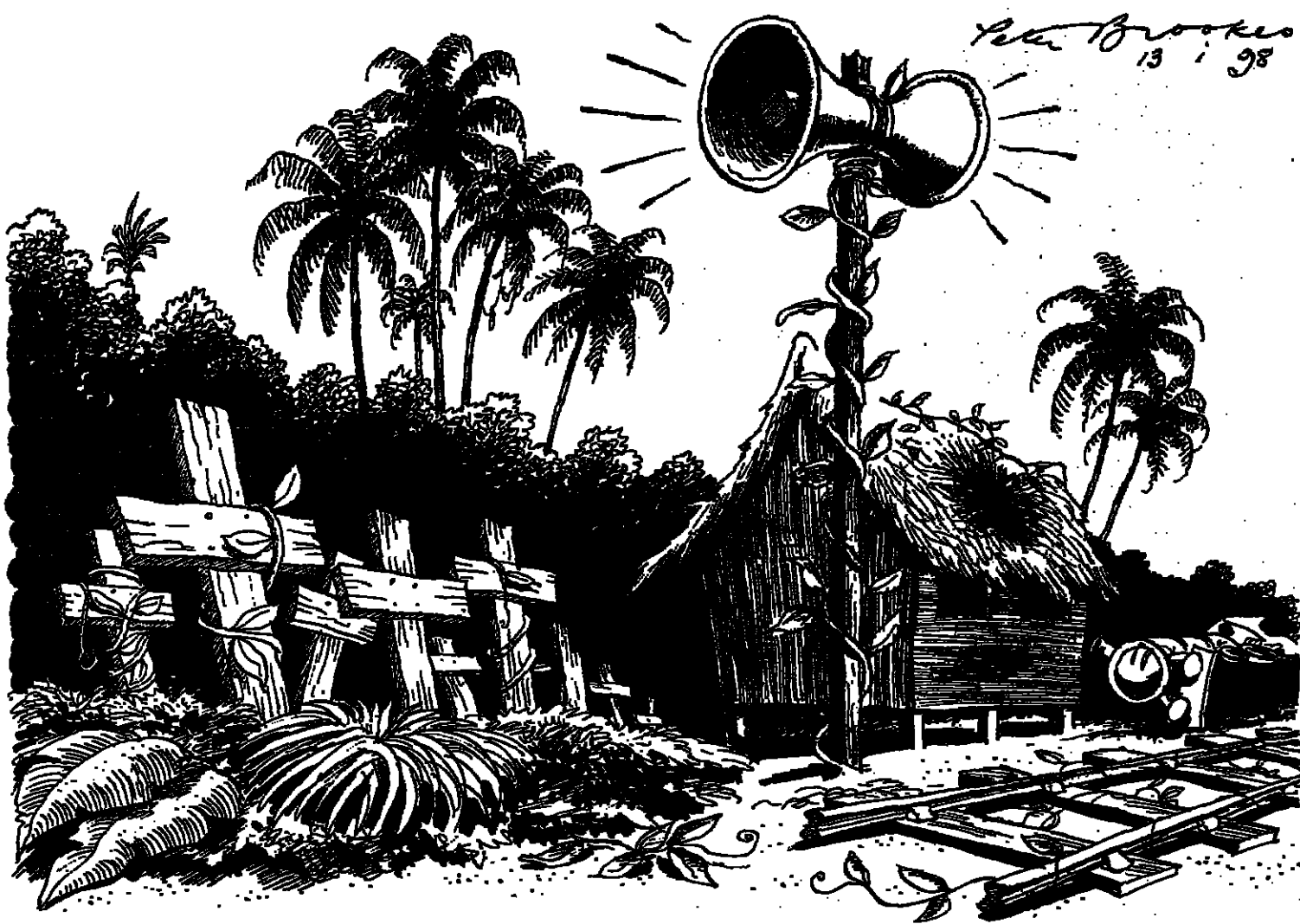
In the days ahead, therefore, Mr Hashimoto faces a historic, but painful choice. He could save Asia by announcing largescale Keynesian tax cuts, but this would require him to admit that his previous policies were wrong. Admitting mistakes is a difficult business for all politicians—and for Japanese politicians above all. But if Mr Hashimoto can bring himself to confess to the crimes committed by his predecessors in the 1940s, perhaps he can find the courage to admit his own fallibility.

So much is now in the public domain that I have no ethical difficulty in permitting myself to observe that the Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary is a louse. A cad, if you prefer; or in pop-psychology argot an "emotional illiterate". (There is a similar expression liberally sprinkled through the modish bestseller *Bridget Jones's Diary*, but the decorum of this page bars me from using it.)

To leave your wife is one thing, but the gracelessness with which Robin Cook ended his marriage takes the breath away. When your wife has been not only a homemaker and mother of your children, but a doughty breadwinner for 28 years when she has forgiven you at least one mistress; when you have happily planned to go to the Hong Kong handover together and are in the act of going on holiday, it is hardly decent to announce the end of your marriage in the airport lounge. Even if it is the VIP lounge, and even if some Downing Street neurotic is on the phone fretting about the gutter press.

Nor is it excusable to move straight in with your mistress and treat her as your hostess before you have even filed for divorce; nor to dismiss the situation unilaterally in the words: "The only relationship I have is with the woman I love and the woman I intend to marry." The only relationship? When you have been married with children for more than half your life? Long words fail me: the man's a creep. Margaret Cook—who is fast becoming a national treasure—has every right to tell her story, especially as she has given us such dispassionate, intelligent pointers on the general danger besetting modern marriages: of equals in which the wife has no time to treat the man as a hero, and the secretary has.

But of course her husband should remain as Foreign Secretary. There is a lot of guff being written about how he has undermined his "credibility" in office. All that this means is that the newspapers in question intend to bang on about his sex life for as long as they fancy. To justify this, they invent a public dimension: writing in the *Daily Mail*, Simon Heffer yesterday intoned that Tony Blair must question whether the Foreign Secretary "is up to doing his already intensely demanding and exhausting job while under such fierce and extraordinary public pressure".



"WE APOLOGISE FOR THE LATE ARRIVAL OF THIS APOLOGY..."

The lady and the louse

To leave your wife is one thing — Robin Cook's graceless conduct is another. Yet he should not resign

If the Prime Minister ever does ask himself that question, the answer must be yes. All the signs are that Mr Cook is not a man to let emotional upheavals—or indeed emotional dupeals—get in the way of what he wants. And he wants to be a good Foreign Secretary. There are no symptoms of his being crippled by remorse or self-doubt, and he has never betrayed the slightest sign of caring what we poor intellectual pygmies of journalists think. Moreover, he is very clever and very energetic. His wife, even as her candour flays him, says firmly that he should stay on.

George Orwell once wrote of Salvador Dali that "it should be possible to hold in your head simultaneously the ideas that Dali is a brilliant draughtsman and a disgusting human being". It should be possible for us to hold in our heads the idea that a man can be an efficient Foreign Secretary and an emotional pygmy.

It is possible, actually. Electors do not bestow "credibility" only on nice people, and governments should not be railed by spiteful—or, in this case, just embarrassingly accurate—journalistic reports on the personal failings of ministers. Cecil Parkinson was forced to leave his job not because he was an adulterer, but because his indecision was lampooned as weakness (come to think of it, poor Lord Parkinson had to resign precisely because he was a nicer man than Mr Cook). Even so, it was unnecessary. David Mellor's downfall was not caused by his affair but by reports of financial impropriety. Steven Norris stayed on despite his farcical private life, was a fine transport minister and wrote an endearingly self-mocking book about it all. Nigel Lawson left his wife for his secretary and went on to become Chancellor of the Exchequer. Margaret Thatcher rose to fame while married to a divorced man. There is no evidence at all that the British

public, in a maritally lax era, demands family example from its leaders. Nor that it respects its overmuch: on May 1 last year the nation had no trouble holding simultaneously in its mind the facts that John Major was a nice man, a splendid husband and a burnt-out leader.

Adultery is not a resigning matter: those harking back to the "leaze" of the last Government should remember that the sex was nothing next to the lies and bribes and evasions, to cash-for-questions, the Scott inquiry and the Aitken affair. If Mr Cook stays on, as quite rightly Jack Straw is doing, I see the glimmerings of a workable modern deal between politicians and public. They must understand what they are to us: not saints nor saviours but administrators, organisers, guardians of basic justice and security. We need them to maintain order in finance and public behaviour, to negotiate with other countries and ensure the rights of individuals. We do not need them to tell us how to run our private lives, still less show us. We do not need to see their families and we do not require lectures on ours. A picture of Tony with a child or William with a fiancée does not constitute a policy. Supporting family life means hard fiscal and planning measures, not public spooning.

Ever since the first candidate kissed the first baby, politicians have always seized all available magic to help them. Through phottical and imagery they drape themselves in it: royal magic, tradition magic, animal magic, religious magic, romantic magic. In recent years they have tried family magic: devoted spouses have been paraded before us, children have been quoted in speeches and—with the Blairs—we have been presented with Kennedyesque images of a First Family. It is a nonsensical distraction and it

must stop. Mrs Cook sapiently pointed out to Peter Mandelson in her criticism of the PM's letter of limited condolence: "Tony will have lots of letters to write to erring Cabinet ministers' wives during his premiership and I just want to make sure he gets it right next time". She is right: it probably will happen again, and a wise Prime Minister could limit the damage by limiting his use of family magic forthwith.

The other thing which Mr Blair could do right now is to draw up a code of public behaviour for any future members of his Government whose marriages collapse. The other glaring lesson of the Cook affair is that just because we live in an age of divorce, that does not mean that anything goes. In private social life we all grope for codes of decency when friends run off the marital rails: many of us, for instance, feel that if you have known a couple and know the abandoned one to be devastated about the break, you do not invite the new couple to your house as if nothing were amiss. You may keep up the friendship with the individual, but let time pass before you symbolically accept the new relationship.

Mr Cook should not have moved his mistress into his official London residence: it is funded by the taxpayer and we have the right to be affronted. Nor should he have used her as his hostess when entertaining official visitors such as US Secretary of State Madeleine Albright, nor made the Foreign Office give her a spouse's rights of access, residence and travel. If Mr Blair is as keen on family decency as he pretends, he should overcome his nice-guy embarrassment and confront his arrogant colleague about these things. He might also rethink him for announcing his marriage plans: common etiquette says that married men cannot be fiancés.

So let us have a modern but decorous deal, Prime Minister. By all means tell the electorate that we must put up with Mr Cook's personal unpleasantness in return for his talent. But lay it on the line to the Cabinet too: no more sanctimony, no more spouse-flaunting. And if your marriage does unfortunately collapse, then move out like an honest man or woman, wash your own shirts for a bit and keep your assignments discreet. It isn't much to ask.

Libby Purves

Horse sense

THE Princess Royal, about to ease into the saddle at the British Horse Society, is girding her loins for a fight. In July, the Princess takes over as president of the society (patron: the Queen) and will be spearheading a campaign to exempt nags from taxes. The move could save the Royal Family thousands of pounds a year. The Princess follows the Prince of Wales into the president's seat and will stay there for two years, instead of the customary one. "It will not be an empty presidency," says Michael Clayton, chairman of the BHS. "The Princess will certainly be doing things."

Top of her hitlist will be tax imposed when Britain joined the Common Market, which vex the society's 60,000 members. She is aggrieved that, in her words, "an ill-informed civil servant, with one stroke of his pen, changed the status of horses from working animals into luxury items". This turned stud farms and riding schools into enterprises, rather than agricultural premises, thus qualifying them for VAT and high business rates. The Queen will doubtless watch her daughter's campaign. She owns two farms, home to 20 mares and 16 yearlings. Lord Carnarvon, her racing manager, says "we never discuss the financial side of the business", but acknowledges that a tax change would benefit the farms.

The Princess displayed her equestrian talents at the 1976

Diary

mas to receive a double salary. Had Smithkline Beecham, their employer, found charity or religion? Probably not. The Midland Bank has now sent out letters to staff blaming a "processing error". It says: "The purpose of writing is to kindly ask you to return the duplicated amount—or, put another way, can we have our £16 million back?"

Left out

TONY BLAIR has expressed confidence in Robin Cook but is the trust mutual? The Foreign Secretary asked his Portuguese counterpart at a European Union meeting what he thought of the slogan for Britain's presidency. The diplomat pondered: "Europe: Working for People" and looked unimpressed. Cook asked how it sounded in Por-

tuguese. "Frankly, it sounds a bit left-wing," replied Lisbon's Foreign Minister, to which Cook said: "Let's not tell Tony Blair then."

GORDON BROWN has commissioned a £1.5million television advertising campaign to advance his frustrated political ambitions. The Chancellor's populist Budget play of handing out an extra £20 for pensioners' fuel bills backfired when Harriet Harman told him that her DSS was incapable of distributing the cash before winter. Now an embarrassed Brown has overruled Treasury officials and ordered a blanket campaign, featuring a lovely old trout turning the fuel up, to remind pensioners that his belated Christmas present is still in the post. But pensioners will receive the money automatically, so wise Treasury mandarins fear the campaign will breach Whitehall rules banning party political adverts. Tories say the full-page adverts featuring four £5 notes, produced by Labour's election agency BMP DDB, is a grandiose ploy. "This is another example of Brown drawing attention to a decision he has taken," says Simon Burns, the Shadow social security spokesman. Questions in the House will follow.

Twin benefits

I KNOW he is an important chap, but does Lord Irvine of Lairg, the Lord Chancellor, need two parliamentary private secretaries? In the new PPS list, the wallpaper-enthusiast and orange-fancier has both Tony Wright and David Lock working for him. The only other with two unpaid toilers is the PM. And no past Lord Chancellor has been so treated. Clearly, this is a belated (and much-needed) sign of Irvine's status.

ANIMALS are causing Anna Chancellors. "duckface" in Four

Turn again if you want a Giuliani

Tim Hames says London's mayor will have little influence

This will be the year of the constitution. Legislation will be finalised for Scotland and Wales. The European Convention on Human Rights will doubtless be adopted and a freedom of information Act duly endorsed. The death of the hereditary peerage may be initiated and a commission on the electoral system could report. Most of these changes will have relatively little impact on the average resident of England. The one change that could have a substantial effect will come with the publication of the White Paper on the administration of London and the referendum in the capital in May. Its centrepiece is the proposed directly elected mayor of London. The Prime Minister has hinted that, if successful, the office will be swiftly exported to other cities.

The idea has caused considerable excitement. A host of potential candidates have been mentioned. Some, notably Lord Archer of Weston-Super-Mare, appear to be running even before the office has been created. The Conservatives have promised an American-style "primacy" through which their champion will be chosen in a ballot of party members in the capital. Labour may feel obliged to conduct a similar exercise—provided they can find a formula that will prevent Ken Livingstone taking the title.

The assumption is that the mayor of London will have real power. The comparison most frequently made, one that has been encouraged by Tony Blair, is with the Mayor of New York or other large American cities. Such figures can have a dramatic influence over crime levels, rates of taxation, and welfare reform. The Government's rhetoric implies that such authority could cross the Atlantic, which is why figures such as Richard Branson and Chris Patten have considered seeking the post. If so, they are likely to be disappointed. The Government's Green Paper *New Leadership for London* will not create a leader of such stature.

There is widespread ignorance about the role of mayors in the United States. Almost all cities and towns elect one, but the possession of a popular mandate does not make them equally significant politicians. In only a very few American cities is the mayor the truly dominant political personality.

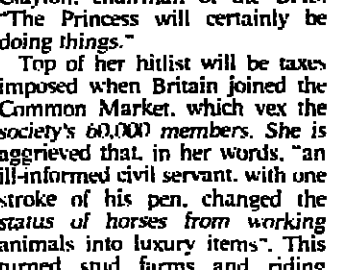
These mayors share certain characteristics. They have the unique ability to hire and fire the heads of departments dealing with crime, education, and economic development. They have the right to prepare a budget for council consideration and that body has little power to make amendments. They have the unimpeded ability to administer the budget after its adoption and power to veto any city council policy pronouncements. This authority has allowed Rudolph Giuliani (a Republican) to dominate New York, even though the council has been controlled by Democrats. Without such clout, deadlock not dynamism would be the order of the day.

A mayor of London should have the same advantages as Mr Giuliani. Unfortunately, given the present proposals, he or she will not. The mayor would be able to make only a modest proportion of key appointments and these would be subject to the consent of the Greater London assembly. The mayor could prepare a budget but the assembly would be free to change it beyond recognition. He or she would not have the unimpeded ability to administer the budget, nor would they enjoy any broad right of veto over assembly decisions. If the White Paper follows a similar line, the new mayor would be all profile and little power.

The Government concedes that there is a problem. The Green Paper admits that mechanisms are needed to avoid "unnecessary conflict" between the mayor and the assembly. It hopes the personal mandate of the mayor will prove sufficient, but this seems unlikely. The London assembly will, after all, be entitled to claim its own mandate. American experience suggests that the election of an individual is not enough to ensure their importance.

London seems set for an outcome that will resemble not New York but Washington, DC. In that city, the President and Congress engage in an enduring struggle for power. Matters are only modestly better when the occupants of Capitol Hill belong to the same party, but decisive and effective leadership is relatively rare. This forthcoming shambles is close to tragic. There is a strong case for elected executive mayors in most major British cities. They would offer real accountability and provide a visible link between voters and local services. This situation can be rescued, even at this late stage, if the White Paper places power with the London mayor and downgrades the assembly. The best option would be the elimination of the elected assembly in favour of a Greater London forum consisting of borough council leaders. There is, unfortunately, no evidence that this will happen.

The author's pamphlet, A little local difficulty: mayors and managers—American models for Britain, is published by Politika this week.

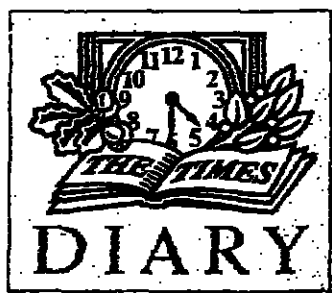


Leading rein: the Princess Royal



Montreal Olympics, which she followed by sampling the thrills of amateur jockeying. Britain is the only country on the Continent where horses are not seen as an agricultural product," she says.

IMAGINE the joyous surprise of 8,000 workers just before Christ-



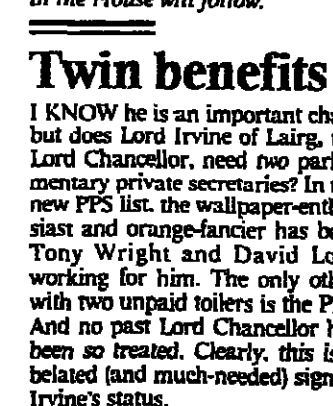
mas to receive a double salary. Had Smithkline Beecham, their employer, found charity or religion? Probably not. The Midland Bank has now sent out letters to staff blaming a "processing error". It says: "The purpose of writing is to kindly ask you to return the duplicated amount—or, put another way, can we have our £16 million back?"

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The economy must be bad if they've had to sell their furniture

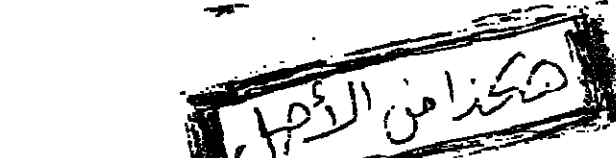


Chancellor: canine advice



Weddings and a Funeral, further embarrassment. The beguiling, young actress is looking for a trainer for her Jack Russell, Comet. The pup, barely a year old, has been wreaking havoc with its yapping, snapping and fondness for the legs of strangers. Says a victim: "It is jolly nice, just a little too friendly." Eager trainers, please do not apply via Diary Towers.

JASPER GERARD





BEYOND APOLOGY

A way forward for the Japanese Emperor's visit

Japan's official apology for the suffering of British prisoners in the Second World War is a welcome attempt to exorcise the demons of the past with a gesture of reconciliation ahead of the state visit by Emperor Akihito in May. Although overdue, it is not the first expression of remorse, nor is it as comprehensive in its implication as some would like. But it goes further than anything said before: it has been made in the name of the entire Japanese Cabinet; and it has been accompanied by a promise to help financial veterans' visits to battlefields and cemeteries as well as paying for the grandchildren of POWs to study for a year in Japan. Tony Blair was right, therefore, to describe the gesture as a very significant step forward.

The Japanese have found it peculiarly difficult to acknowledge the extent of their wartime atrocities. After devastating defeat came a general amnesia. Many Japanese were preoccupied by the immense task of rebuilding a shattered society; others were traumatised by the cataclysms of the two atomic bombs; others simply wanted to forget. For years, politicians kept a nation in ignorance: history textbooks were heavily censored, politicians refused to accept discussion of the war and the reverence surrounding the imperial family made it a national taboo even to discuss the wartime role of the long-lived Emperor Hirohito.

This refusal to look history in the face has made the issue of guilt and atonement extraordinarily sensitive, both in Japan and those new postwar Western allies who have been anxious to avoid discussion of the ethics of Hiroshima. Successive Japanese governments have attempted to grapple with the issue, but evasiveness, understatement and ambiguity have only strengthened the resolve of victims to wring from Tokyo the kind of humiliating acknowledgment that politicians appear at such pains to avoid.

By 1995 the Japanese Government had steered itself for an honest acceptance, 50

years after VJ-Day, of the suffering caused by Japanese aggression. Yesterday's announcement is a hardening and broadening of that position. The issue for the surviving veterans, however, is now one of compensation. Japan has resisted all demands for financial restitution, arguing that the issue was settled in the San Francisco Treaty of 1951. The awards were, by today's standards, derisory — but the Japanese point out that they were paid at a time when the country was starving. Tokyo also fears that reopening the issue could lead to claims running into billions from Asia.

Understandably, neither Britain nor Japan wants anything to disrupt an important visit by the Emperor. But it is precisely because the imperial family represents the only constitutional and symbolic bridge between wartime Japan and today's thriving democracy that the painful issue will inevitably make an impression. This neither can, nor should, be suppressed. But there is a way that honour can be satisfied on all sides. The British Legion yesterday welcomed Japan's apology, saying it advanced the spirit of reconciliation. Most former prisoners believe this is the only way ahead. If a fund could be set up, similar to those established with some of the looted Nazi gold to help elderly Holocaust victims, the concerns of the veterans that impoverished former prisoners of war should not die in need would be satisfied.

Such a fund can be independent of the Japanese Government but should expect a substantial voluntary contribution from it. In Britain, it might be supported by the Japanese companies that have such large investments not only in the British economy but in Anglo-Japanese relations. Payment should not be limited to British POWs but extend to all surviving victims of the Pacific war. It would add to yesterday's statement a token of personal compensation and a symbolic restitution of dignity.

A CALL FOR THE CAVALRY

East Asia needs Washington leadership and Tokyo action

Stock markets crashed and currencies sunk again across East Asia yesterday in what is becoming a dangerously familiar ritual. The catalyst may change — Indonesia's budget one week, a Hong Kong securities company the next — but the direction does not alter. With every month it is assumed that the market floor must be imminent. The floor keeps on falling. The possible dire consequences for the international economy are increasingly apparent. Other countries must intensify their assistance not out of charity but simple self-interest.

The International Monetary Fund has borne the brunt of these external efforts. It has acted with appropriate urgency and wisely responded to the growing crisis in South Korea through an accelerated financial package. It is also attempting to end or at least ease the current turmoil in Indonesia. The IMF cannot be expected to deal with these problems alone. An inferno requires more than one firefighter. The United States and Japan, the world's two largest economies, have distinct contributions that they must offer. If they do not then it should not be assumed that events in East Asia will correct themselves.

The IMF is in normal circumstances used to operating with individual nations driven to difficulty by inflation and excessive state debt. The IMF's policy prescription, although tough, is usually effective if followed. The scale of the economic calamity in East Asia surpasses all precedent. It is also concentrated on private rather than public debt, although in most Asian countries personal and institutional relationships between banks and bureaucracies make it difficult to disentangle the two. A stronger

dose of the standard medicine will not be sufficient. It might prove counterproductive.

The United States is better placed than the IMF alone to pursue the inevitably political aspects of the Asian crisis. The dispatch of Larry Summers, the deputy US Treasury Secretary, to Indonesia was a welcome signal that Washington is aware of its responsibilities. The US Treasury and Federal Reserve Board should assume a higher profile still. The Americans can stress to Presidents and Prime Ministers across the region that they must demonstrate real commitment to the wholesale overhaul of their financial institutions and replace political cronyism with impersonal market principles, if other elements of the IMF programme are to be treated with flexibility.

This American initiative will be of only modest value if Japan does not underpin it with fresh action. The Japanese economy dominates the region. A dramatic set of tax cuts — on a much bigger scale than the piecemeal proposals that have periodically emerged from Tokyo in recent months — is the essential precondition for economic recovery in this area. It is far from certain that the Japanese will pursue this option.

The IMF cannot await assistance indefinitely. The Clinton Administration appears willing but is partly hampered by Congressmen of both parties who have refused to release extra American funds to the IMF. The Hashimoto Administration has not yet even offered convincing intent. The time for populist posturing on Capitol Hill and timid tax measures in Tokyo has long passed. If international leadership does not arrive swiftly and effectively then it may have the opportunity to make an impact at all.

CONRAN ARTIST

Sir Terence gains more from the dome than it does from him

"Vanity, saith the preacher, all is vanity": so it is not surprising that Sir Terence Conran doesn't want a preacher in the dome, any more than Quasimodo would have wanted a mirror in his boudoir. A self-made man, Sir Terence appreciates his own creator but not the one responsible for the Universe. The creative consultant to the Millennium Experience has pronounced, in a manner which might be considered *ex cathedra* were it not for his disdain for such fuddy-duddy furnishings, that there will be no room at the dome for Jesus in the Christmas season which sees in the millennium. The birthday of the Holy Infant, according to Sir Terence, "is not an event that has very much to do with Christianity. It's to do with time."

That is fatuity of the first order, on a par with suggesting that Westminster Abbey is not a building which has much to do with God but is really all about stone. The millennium has the significance it does because of He whose incarnation in flesh it commemorates. Sir Terence may owe his position as dome consultant to, among other things, his closeness to new Labour but he has something to learn about staying "on message". Last week Peter Mandelson promised that "the impact of Christianity on Western civilisation will be central to the Millennium Experience at Greenwich".

Sir Terence's colleague Stephen Bayley has already walked away from the dome, complaining of Mr Mandelson's "dictatorial" style. Will Sir Terence be prepared

to genuflect, or will he join the exodus of other prophets who have not been properly recognised. We recall that early source of inspiration, Gary Withers of the Imagination group, Mr Bayley and the absent impresario Sir Cameron Mackintosh.

Those who wish the dome well, not least *The Times*, are anxious that all the creative talent available be harnessed to the cause. But, as Sir Terence should know, too many cooks can spoil the broth. It must be asked if the dome really benefits as much from his interventions as he himself benefits from his association with this Government's prestige. Although he is a gifted furniture salesman, when Sir Terence enters the public arena, it sounds as though opportunism knocks.

On Saturday, in *The Times Magazine*, Sir Terence encouraged the chef Marco Pierre White to "Be a man of the people. Be a Blairite." He was not discussing welfare reform, but foie gras in pigeon de Bresse. Sir Terence felt that, in reality, "what we are talking about is democracy", which is, Tom Paine and Martin Luther King might have been grateful to know, "offering good food in enjoyable surroundings to rich and poor". The huddled masses queuing at Quaglino's for a *plateau de fruits de mer* (at £27.50 per person) must be grateful that they are playing their part in the emancipation of mankind. There is a place for Sir Terence's thin-sliced opinions in the life of the capital; but it is not at the heart of the Government's grandest project.

Punishment of the innocent in court

From Mr Christopher Drew

Sir, For lawyers engaged in defending defendants on such charges who, together with their families, have been subject to malicious acts on the part of their neighbours. Apart from ostracism at work and at school, and the "hate mail" which is commonplace in such cases, they have suffered direct physical harassment, including the killing of domestic pets, and vandalism, extending even to the destruction of the accused person's home by arson.

These acts were all committed against persons who were ultimately acquitted of all charges. I have not encountered similar reactions towards persons charged with, say, armed robbery.

I believe that the public interest in preserving the due process of law outweighs any prejudice to the transparency of justice that may arise from the anonymity of the accused and their families — an anonymity which would, of course, end at such time as a court arrived at a finding of guilt — and that the courts should be granted the appropriate discretion.

I am, Sir,
Yours faithfully,
CHRISTOPHER DREW,
Warwick House Chambers,
8 Warwick Court,
Gray's Inn, WC1R 5DL.
cdrew@aol.com
January 6.

Common law families

From the Rural Dean of Guildford

Sir, The Law Commission's proposals to grant property rights to cohabiting couples (report and leading article, January 5) are said not to undermine the institution of marriage. The reality suggests that this is wishful thinking.

Why should couples choose to get married when they can have all the advantages of the married state without the commitment and responsibilities? Cohabiting couples cannot have the freedom to walk out of a relationship and the right to claim for property and money from the union.

If the Government wants to bolster the institution of marriage, it should move in the opposite direction to the Law Commission. It should recognise that cohabiting couples in a long-term relationship and those with children are effectively married in a "common law" relationship. Couples with children and those who register their partnerships for the purpose of protecting property rights should be treated as married and bound by the same law as those married in church or register office.

English law recognised common law marriages prior to 1753, and Scottish law still recognises marriages by cohabitation and repute in certain circumstances. To give legal recognition to common law marriage would give children and deserted partners the protection of the law. It would bring many cohabiting unions within the scope of the marriage laws and strengthen marriage and the family.

Yours faithfully,
JEREMY COLLINGWOOD,
25 Waterden Road,
Guildford, Surrey GU1 2AZ.
January 6.

Cabinet government

From Sir Patrick Nairne

Sir, Peter Riddell's words of warning to the Prime Minister about a presidential style of government ("RIP: Cabinet government", January 5) bring to mind the assertion of a former Labour Prime Minister, Harold Wilson, in his book, *The Government of Britain*:

Were any Prime Minister — and in my view this is inconceivable — to seek to change the conventions and challenge the concept of Cabinet government in a major sense... as a step to some form of unconstitutional personal rule, he would find not only his Cabinet, but the whole of Whitehall against him, and rightly.

There may well be scope for improving the machinery and procedures of the Cabinet and its committees; but collective Cabinet consideration of major policy issues — especially when they present "tough choices" and cut across several departments — will remain essential for sustaining firm collective responsibility.

Yours faithfully,
PATRICK NAIRNE
(Second Permanent Secretary,
Cabinet Office, 1973-75),
Yew Tree,
Chilton, Chipping Norton, OX7 3HU.
January 5.

Letters to the Editor should carry a daytime telephone number. They may be sent to a fax number — 0177-782 5046.
e-mail to: letters@the-times.co.uk

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

1 Pennington Street, London E1 9XN Telephone 0171-782 5000

Putting purple among the ermine

From the Reverend Canon T. V. Russ

Sir, The question of a seat for Cardinal Hume in the House of Lords (report, January 5; letters, January 7; Diary, January 8) perhaps raises questions not envisaged by the Roman Catholic Code of Canon Law.

England, with its continuous monarchy and its established Church, is perhaps the only old Christian country which combines prayer and legislation, prayer and government in a formal way. There is something very desirable here which should not be lost.

At the same time, with democracy and secularism one cannot claim that all legislation is holy or all government policies are upright. We are not in the age of Christendom where one might fondly but mistakenly imagine this to be the case. Legislation de facto embodies sin as well as virtue.

It is therefore inappropriate for a cleric to be directly responsible for legislation, and this is the Catholic Code of Canon Law bears witness. But it might be very appropriate for a cleric to be allowed to speak prior to legislation but not to vote. The speech should perhaps be limited to 15 minutes or so to avoid a "holy filibuster". Such a right would mark the distinction between lords temporal and lords spiritual.

Such a right should be ex-officio rather than an honour given to a dearly loved Cardinal. It could belong to certain bishops as part of their task. In this way the ecclesiastical trap-

pings of our public life could witness to a genuine potential of Christian influence while maintaining the holiness and uprightness that belongs to the Church.

Sincerely,
TIMOTHY V. RUSS,
The Presbytery,
23 High Street, Great Missenden,
Buckinghamshire HP16 9AA.
January 8.

From Mr Richard Kaberry

Sir, William Rees-Mogg ("Priests of the alleged offence and of the offender" well in advance of a jury having delivered a verdict. I have direct knowledge of defendants on such charges who, together with their families, have been subject to malicious acts on the part of their neighbours. Apart from ostracism at work and at school, and the "hate mail" which is commonplace in such cases, they have suffered direct physical harassment, including the killing of domestic pets, and vandalism, extending even to the destruction of the accused person's home by arson.

These acts were all committed against persons who were ultimately acquitted of all charges. I have not encountered similar reactions towards persons charged with, say, armed robbery.

I believe that the public interest in preserving the due process of law outweighs any prejudice to the transparency of justice that may arise from the anonymity of the accused and their families — an anonymity which would, of course, end at such time as a court arrived at a finding of guilt — and that the courts should be granted the appropriate discretion.

Yours sincerely,
RICHARD KABERRY,
15 Dorrington Road,
Sale, Cheshire M33 5DX.
January 8.

Wildlife sponsorship

From Mr Martin Thomas

Sir, Your report (January 6) highlighting the failure of the Government's biodiversity challenge to attract corporate sponsorship reveals an alarming naivety on the part of our ministers.

Corporate sponsorship may have once been inextricably linked with a company's charitable policy; but as with all marketing investments, it is now influenced by largely commercial considerations. Exhortations from ministers, no matter how worthy the cause, will simply not work. Companies will evaluate the sponsorship of a skylark using the same criteria as an arts or sports event.

With the Government seeking commercial support for numerous schemes, not least the Millennium Dome, this is a reality of commercial life that it needs to grasp; otherwise we will be reading even more stories about the refusal of business to support non-commercial initiatives.

Yours faithfully,
MARTIN THOMAS
(Managing Director,
Cohn & Wolfe
(Sponsorship consultants),
Communications Building,
48 Leicester Square, WC2H 7LJ.
January 6.

A twitch in time

From the Director of the British Trust for Ornithology

Sir, I do not agree with the suggestion in your leading article, "A twitch in time" (January 3), that Britain's amateur birdwatchers have turned away from serious ornithology to concentrate on the pursuit of rarities.

While it is true that rarities attract more attention than previously, so do serious surveys of the status and distribution of commoner birds. Amateur ornithologists put hundreds of thousands of man-hours into such work annually.

It is their efforts that provide not only the evidence of widespread decline of many once common species but also much of the scientific information that is needed to understand the causes.

Chasing rare birds often hits the headlines but it should not be allowed to obscure the efforts of the dedicated survey workers who do so much for ornithology and conservation.

Yours faithfully,
JEREMY GREENWOOD,
Director,
British Trust for Ornithology,
The Nunnery,
Thetford, Norfolk IP24 2PU.
January 9.

Dome spectacular

From the Chief Executive of The New Millennium Experience Co Ltd

Sir, Your leading article (January 7) on the Millennium Dome mentioned a comment by Mr Keith Bales, formerly with Disney, suggesting lack of experience in the New Millennium Experience Company of running major visitor attractions.

No one has previously run a Millennium Experience, that is sure. However, the operational planning is being done by our team of senior executives with extensive experience in the design and operation of visitor attractions for clients or employers ranging from the national garden festivals, through the historic royal palaces, National Motor Museum, Madame Tussaud's and the London Planetarium in the UK, to various attractions and leisure developments in the US, Middle East, Australia and Ireland.

The team is led by Operations Director Ken Robinson, Chairman of the UK Tourism Society, and includes

Philip Deighton, Brian Roberts and Max Booth, all of whom are well known and respected members of the tourism and leisure industry.

Yours faithfully,
JENNIFER A. PAGE,
Chief Executive, The New Millennium Experience Co Ltd,
110 Buckingham Palace Road,
London SW1W 9SB.
January 8.

From Mr A. E. Grant

Sir, A "dome with corners" (letter, December 31) does in fact exist.

I refer to the Hagia Sophia in Istanbul, once a Christian cathedral, then for several centuries a mosque and now a museum, but with the evidence of its Christian origins well preserved by the Turks, and witness to the Christian faith for almost one and a half millennia.

Yours faithfully,
A. E. GRANT,
16 Lawn Road,
Taunton, Somerset TA2 6EH.
January 2.

A critical look at traffic reductions

From Mr Robert Phillipson

Sir, The aims of the Road Traffic Reduction Targets Bill (letter, January 2) sound modest, but are not. Reductions of 5 per cent of 1990 traffic by 2005 and 10 per cent by 2010 would apply to 411 billion vehicle kilometres, of which cars contributed 336 billion. Thus the Bill's targets are 390.5 billion and 370 billion vehicle kilometres respectively.

Based on 1997 government forecasts, the growth range for all traffic in 2005 is between 478 and 530 billion vehicle kilometres and for cars between 385 billion and 420 billion. A traffic level of 390.5 billion would require a reduction of between 18 and 26 per cent and for cars of between 23 and 33 per cent. For 2010, traffic cuts of 26 to 36 per cent would be needed.

In most parts of the country (big cities are different) there is no need for further restrictions. Motorway capacity can be increased to the benefit of the whole economy.

Yours sincerely,
ROBERT PHILLIPSON
(Director,
British Aggregate Construction
Material Industries, 1982-95),
10 Wellington Square, SW3 4NJ.
January 2.

Tippett obituary

From Mr Christopher Senior

Sir, The long life and inspiring achievement of the composer Sir Michael Tippett have been justly celebrated in lengthy obituaries. In your own notice of January 10 the reference to Meirion (Bill) Bowen as "mainstay of his personal and musical life for many years" is entirely appropriate and merits amplification.

Sir Michael was still producing major works in and well beyond his 80th year. This remarkable creative longevity was no doubt, to a great extent, the result of the dedicated and uncompromising protection provided by Bill Bowen, supported by close friends and by Tippett's life-long publisher, Schott & Co.

For more than 20 years Bill ensured that, as worldwide interest in Tippett's music belatedly increased, Sir Michael continued to have the peace and solitude which his work required, as well as the opportunities for public appearances and travel which he so much enjoyed and from which he drew inspiration.

As one who helped briefly in the administration of this beneficial regime, I am clear that an immense debt of gratitude is owed to Bill Bowen by the many people throughout the world who are uplifted, in the composer's own words, by "images of abounding, generous, exuberant beauty".

Yours faithfully,
CHRISTOPHER SENIOR,
58 King Street, Southwell,
Nottinghamshire NG25 0EN.
January 12.

From Mr Meirion Bowen

Sir, Sir Michael Tippett would have been in derision at the final sentences of your otherwise admirable obituary. Instead of stating that he "never married" and is "survived by" (I myself) why not say "he was openly homosexual"?

As his nearest and dearest for nearly three decades, I assure you that he always preferred honesty and candour to polite euphemisms.

Yours truly,
MEIRION BOWEN,
5 Thirkon Road, SW11 5SU.
January 10.

Spirit of giving

From Mrs V. Bennett

Sir, Mrs R. Ennart (letter, December 31) is mistaken in thinking that suggested donations to charities or gifts to the Third World in lieu of wedding presents are peculiar to North America. My son and his wife married in Esher, Surrey, in 1984. Their wedding invitation suggested donations to Oxfam.

Yours faithfully,
V. BENNETT,
4 Hampton Grove,
Ewell, Epsom, Surrey KT17 1LA.
January 2.

Déjà vu

From Mr Alan Sanders

Sir, Lunar calendars can be recycled (Mr John Martin's letter, December 30; letters, January 10) every 60 years in Mongolia, but even so there may be unexpected pitfalls.

Guided by his astrologers, the Abbot of Gandan, leader of Mongolia's Lamaists, has just decreed an intercalary month, only three weeks before Mongolians were due to celebrate their lunar new year festival.

As a result, when China marks the Spring Festival at the end of January, Mongolia will still have another month to wait for the Year of the Tiger to arrive.

Yours faithfully,
ALAN SANDERS
(Lecturer in Mongolian Studies,
School of Oriental and African
Studies),
29 Cardinal Close,
Reading, Berkshire RG4 6BZ.
January 10.

OBITUARIES

KLAUS TENNSTEDT

Klaus Tennstedt, conductor, died on January 11 aged 71. He was born on June 6, 1926.

Not until he was approaching 50 did Klaus Tennstedt come to prominence as a conductor. Then, after a 1974 North American debut in Toronto followed by a concert in Boston, he found himself sought after all over Europe and the United States...

fingers of his left hand forced him to abandon the instrument. He always claimed that experience as a violinist had been invaluable in teaching him length of line in musical phrasing...

Turning to the piano, he began to tread the traditional path of an aspirant conductor, playing for rehearsals, coaching singers and conducting occasional performances until he was appointed principal conductor of the opera at Karl-Marx-Stadt (Chemnitz) in 1954...

Tennstedt's career continued on unexceptional lines within the confines of East Germany, with appointments at the Dresden Landestheater, 1958-62, and at Schwerin, 1962-70...



brought calls from all over America. Bemused, he accepted every offer, which came from orchestras as prominent as those of Chicago, New York, Cleveland and Philadelphia...

Tennstedt's London debut came in 1976, and his European career suddenly flourished. Concerts with the Orchestre de Paris, the Berlin and Vienna Philharmonics and the Amsterdam Concertgebouw came his way...

packed concerts in Tel Aviv coincided with the 40th anniversary of Kristallnacht. Ten years later the orchestra planted 36 trees in his honour, a Hebrew custom to wish him long life...

make his debut at the Metropolitan Opera, New York, in Fidelio, though his operatic career never flourished as much as he might have wished.

His association with the LPO was sealed when in 1985 he became its principal conductor. It was all too short a reign. Already in 1985 a workload of 18 concerts in 20 days coast-to-coast in America had brought on a heart disturbance.

Returning to the concert platform in March 1986, he gave an overpowering performance of Mahler's Sixth Symphony, a work marked by three titanic hammer-blows of Fate in the finale...

But this was the exploratory musicianship, a taking of risks and trust of the players' collaboration, which he had deeply admired in Furtwängler. Another hero was Felix Weingartner, whose Beethoven he respected, and still more Bruno Walter, whom he regarded as the greatest of all Mahler conductors...

Klaus Tennstedt was born in Merseburg, the son of Hermann Tennstedt, leader of the second violins in the Halle Municipal Theatre. He studied the violin at the Leipzig Conservatoire and became leader of the Halle Orchestra in 1948...



Hazel Bainbridge, actress, died on January 7 aged 88. She was born on January 25, 1909.

ALTHOUGH never a star and seldom, if ever, destined to see her name in lights, Hazel Bainbridge was a much respected actress of considerable versatility. The theatre was not only her career but her passion...

She came from a theatrical family. Her great-grandfather, T. E. Evans, ran his own Shakespearean company and had worked with Charles Kean at Drury Lane...

HAZEL BAINBRIDGE

built in Rochester — the Theatre Royal — is mentioned in Dombey and Son. Her grandmother, Caroline Boughton, was a notable leading lady and a member of Oscar Wilde's circle...

OWEN BARFIELD

Owen Barfield, writer, philosopher and solicitor, died on December 14 aged 99. He was born on November 9, 1898.

OWEN BARFIELD, remarked C. S. Lewis, "cannot talk on any subject without illuminating it". Barfield was probably the subtlest and most powerful thinker of the Oxford clique known as the Inklings...

In the 1930s she joined the Ben Great Players and went with the company to the West Indies, playing Ariel in The Tempest and Jessica in The Merchant of Venice...

OWEN BARFIELD

First World War and in 1921 took a first in English at Wadham College. At Oxford he met C. S. Lewis, with whom he was often to take holidays. His life's work began with a postgraduate thesis on the nature of imagination...

OWEN BARFIELD

While the pulse of Europe falters — How I hate this bloody life! For 30 years he published very little, though his years as a solicitor did produce two remarkable literary fruits: an essay on "Poetic Diction and Legal Fiction"...

PERSONAL COLUMN

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PERSONAL COLUMN

When we translate the Latin spiritus we have to render it either as "spirit" or as "breath" or as "wind". But early users of language would not have made any such distinction between these meanings...

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When we translate the Latin spiritus we have to render it either as "spirit" or as "breath" or as "wind". But early users of language would not have made any such distinction between these meanings...

MODERN WEAPONS FOR THE POLICE.

SPECIAL COMMITTEE'S TESTS. The special committee of officials of the Metropolitan Police which is entrusted with the duty of reporting to the Secretary of State on the question of the provision of improved firearms for the force has practically concluded its investigations...

ON THIS DAY

January 13, 1911. A special committee of Metropolitan Police officials had the duty of advising the Home Secretary on what weapons were most suitable for police work. Not surprisingly, perhaps, Mr Churchill, the Home Secretary, "fired a large number of rounds". After all, he had more than a little experience of firearms.

PERSONAL COLUMN

When we translate the Latin spiritus we have to render it either as "spirit" or as "breath" or as "wind". But early users of language would not have made any such distinction between these meanings...

Partnership... Court of Appeal... reviewed... provision... TIME

Small firms see end to North-South divide

By JENNIFER DAVEY THE North-South divide has disappeared as far as small businesses are concerned, Grant Thornton, the accounting group, says. For the first time in the past three years owner-managers in the North have allowed themselves to anticipate an increase in turnover that has exceeded the expectations of owner-managers in the South. Andrew Godfrey, head of growth and development services, says. Grant Thornton's annual European Business Survey indicates owner-managers in the North expect turnover to increase substantially in 1998. Their hopes are shared, to a lesser extent, by owner-managers throughout Greater London and the South West. Mr Godfrey says: "It does seem that in terms of expected turnover the traditional North-South divide has been hit on the head. Generally this is really good news for the UK although a concern must be that the economy could overheat if this growth rate is realised."

A £1m homespun story of publishing success

Rodney Hobson talks to the mothers of Barefoot Books



Nancy Traversy, left, and Tessa Strickland with their children

Computers are still no substitute for the virtual reality to be found in the world of books. If anything, computers have brought publishing within the grasp of smaller companies. One success story is Barefoot Books, whose turnover now tops £1 million a year in spite of the fact that its offices are an attic room of a Cotswold farmhouse and the top floor of a Georgian house in Islington, London. The business was started five years ago as a high-quality children's publishing company, reflecting a variety of different cultures. Publications, which include legends and folk stories, are lovingly illustrated and are aimed mainly at children up to the age of eight. The aim is to expand in the US, where Barefoot is taking over direct control of the distribution of its titles, and to raise turnover to £10 million within the next five years. Its founders, Tessa Strickland and Nancy Traversy, had to balance the needs of business and family. The seven children they have between them, aged up to 12 years, are an ideal testing ground for new authors. Early trading was difficult. Cash-strapped local education authorities had cut back on spending and many large publishers were wary

of publishing new books. However, Barefoot turned the corner and annual profits now top £200,000. Mrs Strickland is divorced and lives with her two sons and one daughter in the Cotswolds farmhouse. Mrs Traversy, the Highbury half of the partnership, and her husband have three young daughters and a son. Both women spend their working days and, once their children are in bed, a fair number of working evenings, in offices at the top of their homes. For Mrs Traversy that means a room that was once a shelter for wayward women and later a wartime convalescence home. For Mrs Strickland,

it is an A-frame attic with gable windows looking west to the mountains. Mrs Traversy said: "We started Barefoot Books when my first daughter had just been born and now, with three more additions to the family, life is fairly frantic. With a rapidly expanding business though, there certainly has not been time for maternity leave. "It is possible to combine family and work when you have support, the flexibility that comes with an office in your home, and the latest technology. "Although they live more than 100 miles apart the two partners have been able to keep each other fully informed by phone, fax and e-mail and exchanging documents. Mrs Strickland's background was editorial, but after the first two years she took over production, a move that saved thousands of pounds within the first few months. She said: "I was extremely daunted by the prospect of handling our production, but it was becoming obvious that we needed to be able to liaise directly with colour reproduction houses and printers. It is certainly much faster and more cost effective."

From the London office Mrs Traversy manages sales, PR, marketing and finance. There are now five members of staff plus 15 commissioned sales staff covering the UK and continental Europe. Mrs Strickland says a home-based enterprise works in the company's favour. "Authors and artists who come here invariably comment on how peaceful the Cotswolds setting is. Suppliers say the same."

Loss of personal contacts hits suppliers' orders

By RODNEY HOBSON

PERSONAL relationships in business are breaking down, managers of small firms claim. Together with demands for faster and cheaper products, the loss of personal contacts is putting a squeeze on suppliers, especially in manufacturing. The serious shift in business attitudes has come to light through an initiative by Horwath Clark Whitehill. The firm of chartered accountants asked Kingston University to get groups of six to ten small firms together at five centres to thrash out current issues. Robert Blackburn, of the university's Small Business Research Centre, says: "Big business has rising expectations about quality and price. They are going for the cheapest tender rather than awarding contracts to suppliers with whom they have a good relationship." The dialogues were conducted in London, Reading, Kidderminster, Manchester and Glasgow. They will be repeated every six months to provide continuing research on issues affecting small businesses. Professor Blackburn said: "Some of the participants complained volubly about the squeeze on margins. New technology means suppliers, especially manufacturers, are expected to produce higher quality with shorter order times and many small businesses say they cannot keep up. "Personal relations have broken down. Larger firms are driven more by costs. In any case, the relationship is with an individual, not with the large company, and if that person disappears the order disappears as well."

clearly vital to small businesses. Several participants in the dialogues objected to proposals for a statutory right to interest on late payments because they did not want the Government to get in the way. Professor Blackburn said: "The theme that comes through is that small businesses don't want anyone to come between them and their customers. They are willing to accept late payment as part of their relationship with their customer." While businesses feel that the election of a Labour Government removed the uncertainties of the previous two years, Barbara Roche, the Minister responsible for small businesses, has a hard job ahead persuading entrepreneurs of her good intentions. Complaints — rarely specific — abounded that government bodies are the worst offenders in failing to pay bills on time.



Blackburn: rising expectations

Travel Agent advertisement with 'I've just decided on the holiday that I've promised myself but know I won't take' headline.

The Internet is the fastest growing source of export information for small businesses, NatWest Bank says. A survey commissioned through the Small Business Research Trust shows that 26 per cent of small businesses actively use the Internet for information, a far higher proportion than for non-exporting companies. Traditional sources of information remain the most popular, however, with The Overseas Trade Services retaining its place as the most widely used (59 per cent) followed by the Chambers of Commerce (49 per cent) and Business Links (42 per cent).

Nearly half of small businesses are in favour of Britain joining a single European currency, according to a survey by Office World. When the question was asked two years ago only 26 per cent were in favour. Small business customers of Barclays Bank have made an

increased marketing effort and are checking that insurance is adequate for their new year resolutions. Computer compliance with the year 2000 and preparing accounting systems for the introduction of the euro are much lower priorities. The British Franchise Association has launched a Website that includes an introductory guide to evaluating franchises. Access is on

http://www.british-franchise.org.uk. A trade mission to Portugal to enable businesses to find export customers will be run in March by the Liverpool Chamber of Commerce, Business Link Export Services and the Department of Trade and Industry. Merseyside small businesses will have 33 per cent of their travel and subsistence costs funded by European Union grants

up to £100 a day as the area is officially designated as in need of economic regeneration. More than a fifth of 650 businesses surveyed for the Focus Central London Training and Enterprise Council said that lack of parking was the biggest obstacle to growth. The results of the survey coincide with the decision by Westminster City Council to increase parking charges in the West

End from £2.40 to £3 an hour in April. Rundle Walker, a firm of solicitors based in Exeter, Devon, has produced a free guide to dealing with persistent late payments, including legal options. For copies of Collect those debts call Esther Cox on 01392 209205. Bank of America has joined the Factors and Discounters Association, taking membership to 37 financial institutions handling more than £40 billion worth of invoices.

BRIEFINGS

Advertisement for 'rash' featuring a large 'rash' logo and various text elements.

Advertisement for 'Pentium II 233MMX Media Bundle' with a price of £995 and a 2-year warranty.

Advertisement for 'MESSAGE plus' live telephone answering service, offering 24-hour service and personalized responses.

Advertisement for 'TAG POWER PII 233MMX' computer system with specifications like 233MHz processor, 64Mb RAM, and 15" monitor.

Advertisement for 'TAG PC' featuring various computer options and contact information for sales and technical support.

Advertisement for 'TEACHER TRAINING AGENCY' offering appointments for internal auditors by competitive tendering.

Advertisement for 'BUSINESS TO BUSINESS' featuring various services and contact information.

Advertisement for 'TEACHER TRAINING AGENCY' (continued) detailing the purpose of the TTA and inviting organizations to tender for the contract.

Advertisement for 'TEACHER TRAINING AGENCY' (continued) providing contact details and closing date for submissions.

Double Christmas for December winners

A monthly total of 254 points was enough to net our December winner from Nottingham a handsome £1,000

The story so far . . .

Back to league action last weekend, then. Yes, which is just as well. My FA Cup team did dismally on Saturday. And Sunday as well, come to think of it.

Ab yes, your Blackburn Rovers contingent. The same. I thought Hendry was going to score at one point, but . . .

He hit the ball sideways. I saw it.

Very disappointing. I signed him because I seem to remember him scoring lots of headed goals when Blackburn won the FA Carling Premiership in 1995. Goodness me, what a memory you have. Most Manchester United supporters weren't born when that happened.

Quite. But I'm also thinking of replacing him before the fourth-round tie at Sheffield Wednesday. Really? I see that as a goalless draw, like the league game, with a replay giving him an extra appearance point. I'd transfer Gallacher out instead, if I were you. Get a forward in who has a chance of scoring in one of this week's replays.

Who do you suggest?

I have a feeling Arsenal might get one or two at Port Vale, if you can afford Wright or Bergkamp. Overmars looked good on Saturday, scoring two from midfield. Hmm. You're talking pretty heavy investments there. Well, there are always Sheffield Wednesday players like Andy Booth. Home to Watford this week, and up against Colin Hendry of all people in the next round. No thanks. I'm already confused enough having two teams, both of which score points in league games, but are also in another competition with a different name.

Robert Maxwell tried something similar once with Oxford United and Derby County, I believe. And how is your original squad faring?

Don't ask. If I had the transfer resources, I'd sell the lot of them and start again.

I imagine Kenny Dalglish is thinking the same thing. Where did I go wrong, do you think?

In a word? Scotland.

I think you mean Negri. Anyone who signed him early on got a bargain. I went for Laudrup instead, of course. But it's true. Anyone who ignores all those points to be gained north of the border is a fool to himself. Or herself.

Well, wake up before the next round of cup games, when Scotland-based players come in.

And my cut-price Crystal Palace defenders?

On their bikes. You get what you pay for in this game. In a word - Collymore.

So cruel.

Now that the dust of the FA Cup third round has settled, we can announce the winners of the monthly prizes for December.

The main prize of £1,000, a signed football, a sports bag and two tickets to a premier league game goes to Mr Jon Pregon, of Arnold, Nottingham, who scored 254 points during the month. He set his sights on the December prize, as the name of his team, "IT", indicates. His secret? "It's having a bit of background knowledge of football and fitting it into the competition rules," he said. Mr Pregon received his prizes before the televised FA Carling Premiership game between Derby County and Blackburn Rovers, accompanied by his 12-year-old twin sons, Antony and Christopher, who support Nottingham Forest.

In such circumstances, it would be gratifying to report that his success was based on twin strikers, or a stout pairing of central defenders - but, alas, the top scorers in his current team line-up are Andy Cole, of Manchester United, and Tim Sherwood, of Blackburn Rovers, two players with little obvious in common.

Any reference to "twin triumphs" and the like must be reserved for another winner, Juliette Gardner of Banbury, Oxfordshire scored a double success when her team, 15 Chumbawumbas, a regular in the higher reaches of the league tables, won the monthly awards in both the students' and women's leagues with 162



points, due reward for a December of feverish transfer activity.

Common factors in her selection and that of Mr Pregon are the presence of Peter Schmeichel on a regular basis, and faith in Barnsley's dependable captain, Neil Redfern, who had a successful month. John Harrison, too, features in both their current

HOW IS YOUR TEAM DOING?
Call the ITF Checkline on 0821 824 643
5p a minute, using a Touch-tone telephone. Public calls cost twice as much.

teams. No Marco Negri? Yes - but full use of the transfer system means that a present team line-up may reflect little of what has gone into the making of a successful month.

As her paired prizes, Ms Gardner receives two signed footballs, a couple of sportsbags to carry them in, and a grand total of four Premiership tickets.

Jonathan Price of Harrow, Middlesex, is the December winner of the Youth League. His team, Price's Aces One, scored 199 points, thanks to a large rotating squad featuring the usual suspects: Schmeichel, Negri, Cole, and some of the lesser-trumpeted contributors like Eyal Berkovic, of West Ham United, and Neil McCann, of Heart of Midlothian.

The December Internet winner, whose team, UK Best Twelve, scored 214 points, is Mr David Ho, of Liverpool. By the end of December, his team included names like Richardson, Palmer, De Goey and Zola, none of whom have exactly set ITF alight - but Southampton were playing Chelsea that week. A keen eye on the fixture list, in other words, can maximise the potential of your transfer fund.

Speaking of which, there are FA Cup third-round replays this week involving players in the ITF lists. Today, Wimbledon play at Wrexham; tomorrow, Aston Villa are at home to Portsmouth, Arsenal visit Port Vale and Sheffield Wednesday entertain Watford.



£1,000 better off, Jon Pregon and his sons celebrate with Robbie Kozluk, of Derby

FAXBACK: YOUR UP-TO-DATE TEAM SCORES

The brand new Times Faxback service provides you with a complete results sheet of your team, showing current and total scores, dates, times and details of transfers, as well as your position in the ITF League and, if appropriate, your mini-league (women's, students, youth). Scores and transfer confirmations are updated by 12 noon on the day following a match or matches.

Make sure you have your two-digit PIN number ready when you call. To obtain an ITF Team Faxback, simply pick up the handset of the fax machine and dial the telephone number below. If your fax does not have a handset, attach a handset or press the on-hook or telephone button instead, and dial the number below. Listen carefully to the instructions and press the appropriate buttons when asked. Calls cost £1 per minute and are available in the UK only.

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LEAGUE UPDATES

ITF LEAGUE £10,000 top prize £1,000 monthly prize	PFA PLAYERS' LEAGUE Professionals choose their fantasy team
STUDENTS' LEAGUE Monthly prize of premiership tickets, signed football and sports bag	YOUTH LEAGUE Monthly prize of premiership tickets, signed football and sports bag
WOMEN'S LEAGUE Monthly prize of premiership tickets, signed football and sports bag	

WOMEN'S LEAGUE

1 S Brooks	Sandra's Specials	635
2 J Gardner	15 Chumbawumbas	633
3 S Whitfield	Snail Busters	624
4 C Purdy	Kate's Cosmos	618
5 M Hussain	Good Luck Malika	612
6 A Hembrow	The Broomians J	611
7 S Reader	Sophie Reader Fa	609
8 B Fletcher	Ab Fab	603
9 P Johnston	XII Superstars	599
10 C Rute-Guimaraes	Caletaria Artes	592
11 L Emery	Buggys Boys	590
12 A Finch	Annette's Angels	587
13 Adach	Linda's Laggers	583
14 L Fraser	He's Belle's	580
15 H Irvine	Peppar Puts	579
16 J Jeppar	Harry's Heroes	576
17 A Bearn	No Slip Ups	576
18 T Saul	Kate's Upstarts	561
19 C Richards	Fazio Ltd	570
20 P Sloan		

STUDENTS' LEAGUE

1 N Wheatley	HDG Is A Sad Waster	697
2 G Wilson	Dog Soldiers	677
3 M N Wheatley	Widowhood Is Ill	672
4 T Gardner	6 Chumbawumbas	647
5 J Gardner	15 Chumbawumbas	633
6 N Wheatley	A Tight Horse Is Fun	595
7 C Marianczak	Jansen's XI	589
8 J Windcut	Father Stubbooboo	588
9 Steven Shipley	Set Against	585
10 N Razzak	Aristocra	577
11 E Carmichael	Best Masters	573
12 J Frost	Variety Sports Inter	573
13 W Razzak	Fantasia	572
14 T Sharples	Mr Men	570
15 P Dunne	Class Act	563
16 D Garrett	The Spice Boys	564
17 M Griffiths	The Town	563
18 F Ferguson	Saucy Sue Barker	561
19 A Crosses	Smackcrispynship	560
20 I McGill	The White Helms	560

YOUTH LEAGUE

1 D Lewis	Lewis Boys II	680
2 R Wicker	15 Chumbawumbas	640
3 J Gardner	15 Chumbawumbas	633
4 J Laurence	Smooth United	630
5 M Somaraja	Horley Flames	626
6 C McPhillips	Ballybroggers	625
7 C Oyston	The Offspring FC	612
8 C Marianczak	Jansen's XI	589
9 N Brotherton	Total Commitment	581
10 O Ledgard	Oliver's Army	570
11 M Roberts	Krystonia Three	569
12 K Tindall	Flash XI	564
13 E Swales	Esther's Emmentainers	561
14 A Simpson	Aye	553
15 B McMullan	No Opposition	549
16 N McGuinness	The Invincibles	548
17 G Richards	G Force 2	548
18 T Smith	Up The League FC	542
19 J Tompkins	Joesbunchofars	543
20 J Brady	Jamie's Jammers	541

ITF LEAGUE

1 Mike Madden	Poachers never change	777
2 Mr M Jones	Jib	776
3 Mr M Jones	Seve Pats	754
4 D Fenan	Out Of The Blue	752
5 Mary Ann Kennedy	Invemess Undecided	750
6 Malcolm Jackson	No name	748
7 D Shuter	Don 2	740
8 S Legg	Goose 4	740
9 G Rainbow	Rainbows Topteam	738
10 F Fazlousley	IFC	730
11 C Burr	Burr's Spurs 4	729
12 Mr M Jones	Jib	723
13 P Turner	Turner's Earners 5	715
14 A Luckhurst	Turner's Earners 6	709
15 D Shuter	Turner's Earners 7	709
16 P Turner	Turner's Earners 8	709
17 P Turner	Turner's Earners 9	709
18 K Farball	Chelsea 6	707
19 AJ Hastings	Golden Wonders	706
20 D Shuter	This Year's Lot	705
21 A Nowakski	Nadar	703
22 A Luckhurst	Caroline B	701
23 D Shuter	DOM 5	698
24 N Wharby	H D G Is A Sad Waster	697
25 Michael Horan	St Patrick's Charloters	697
26 Mary Ann Kennedy	Too Farr	696
27 G Dolan	Genesis	695
28 Graeme Dabnor	St Remy Strikers	695
29 P Turner	Turner's Earners 9	695
30 Mr D Edbrooke Stainer	Ca	691
31 R Jones	Cell Block H	689
32 D Bare	Teddy 1	687
33 P Bown	Bees XI	687
34 P Turner	Turner's Earners 1	687
35 Mr A Colcombe	Mr Wink XI	682
36 Chris Forde	Game of Two Pints	685
37 Barbo Papa a la Bacon	Novote Spoilers	685
38 P Rees	Yukon Merchants	683
39 R Sawlings	Esther's Emmentainers	682
40 Graeme Dabnor	St Remy Streetfighters	682
41 Mr P Turner	Te T Cup	682
42 R Lockyer	St Remy Strikers	682
43 J Strickland	Esther's Emmentainers	681
44 DM Carter	CLANB	681
45 A Luckhurst	Pinewood Form	680
46 D Ross	Word	680
47 D Ross	Nampy Nuts	680
48 D Ross	Liberos	680
49 Jeremy Dwyer	Nudge Nudge Wink Wink	680
50 S Legg	Goose 8	680
51 A Luckhurst	Caroline A	680
52 A Luckhurst	Tobittu	679
53 J Hunt	John Hunt Taunton 8	679
54 Brian O'Hare	The Warriors	678
55 Susan Makin	Spud 2	678
56 S Legg	Goose 5	678
57 G Wilson	Dog Soldiers	677
58 G Millington	Bramingham FC	677
59 Andy Robson	Survivors	677
60 J Hunt	Club 18-30	676
61 J Hunt	John Hunt Taunton 7	676
62 P Turner	Turner's Earners 4	676
63 K Farball	Zara 3	674
64 H Prichard	Chelsea 2	674
65 Michael Huddleston	Cymru Am Byth 12	672
66 P Turner	Pulp Faction III	672
67 J Sanderson	Turner's Earners 1	671
68 G Kibber	United	671
69 Mr A Melton	Sheets Hills	671
70 Philip Ward	Wannabe Heroes XI	668
71 Andrew Bass	Eddie Won	668
72 D Shuter	Wetherby Racing 7	668
73 A Lynn	KJ45	666
74 Mike Madden	Don 1	666
75 Jon Pregon	Angus's Bolingers	666
76 J Hunt	MMM Fantasy Leaguers	666
77 Mary Ann Kennedy	Jp 1	665
78 R Wicker	John Hunt Taunton 1	664
79 J Gardner	Ollrig Pack RNG	663
80 Mary Ann Kennedy	Robbie	662
81 R Ralph	Marco Champions	662
82 J Laurence	Jabberwocky Town	662
83 Andrew	United United	662
84 W Clark	Blozen Heads	661
85 RF Larkin	Kalena FC	661
86 D Dutton	FC Pops	661
87 Mr M Jones	Jib	661
88 N Lindquist	Huntley Rangers	660
89 P Bee	Burton Twelve	660
90 Graeme Dabnor	St Remy Strikers	660
91 Steven Adams	Britannia Stalkes	660
92 P Turner	Turner's Earners 3	659
93 Tim Oldfield	Winger Warriors 1	659
94 Mr Dg Philip	Obelisk Rovers 6	659
95 George Muszkovich	Best Mac Europe	658
96 I Clayton	Down Rangers	657
97 Kiran & Poni	KRP F.C.	657
98 J Sanderson	Best Boy 6	656
99 J Kichen	Simbas Dream	655
100 A Maddocks	Bets	655

PFA PLAYERS' LEAGUE

1 Paul Simpson	Derby County/Wolves	446
2 Simon Grayson	Aston Villa	436
3 Seve Pats	West Ham United	430
4 John Salako	Coventry City	422
5 Alf-Inge Haaland	Leeds United	420
6 Robert L. Jones	Newcastle United	418
7 Jonathan Hunt	Derby County	406
8 Rob Savage	Leicester City	395
9 David Taylor	Crystal Palace	395
10 Dean Blackwell	Wimbledon	393
11 Richard Shaw	Coventry City	372
12 Stuart Pearce	Blackburn Rovers	370
13 Brian Tare Kvarnne	Liverpool	375
14 Tim Bracker	West Ham United	374
15 David Barry	Newcastle United	372
16 Stuart Pearce	Chelsea	362
17 Kyle Lighthouse	Coventry City	368
18 Phil Salto	Liverpool	368
19 David Seaman	Manchester United	356
20 Andy Townsend	Manchester United	356
21 Nigel Martyn	Leeds United	354
22 Kenny Cunningham	Wimbledon	352
23 Gareth Southgate	Aston Villa	352
24 Paul Williams	Aston Villa/Middlebrough	350
25 Chris Forde	Coventry City	344
26 Lee Dixon	Liverpool	344
27 Nicky Butt	Derby County	343
28 Kevin Wise	Arsenal	342
29 David Wetherall	Manchester United	342
30 Ugo Edozie	Manchester United	337
31 Kevin Hitchcock	Leeds United	337
32 Andrew Liddell	Aston Villa	332
33 John Hendrie	Barnsley	328
34 Les Robinson	Barnsley	328
35 Kevin Muscat	Blackburn Rovers	325
36 Andy Roberts	Crystal Palace	325
37 Les Robinson	Blackburn Rovers/West Ham	325
38 Gary Mabbutt	Crystal Palace	325
39 Lee Sharpe	Derby County	316
40 Graeme Dabnor	Leeds United	316
41 Colin Calderwood	Leeds United	316
42 Colin Hoadley	Blackburn Rovers	312
43 Alan Wright	Newcastle United	311
44 John Breen	Manchester United	311
45 David Beckham	Manchester United	311
46 Steve Clark	Leeds United	308
47 Roger Cross	Chelsea	308
48 Darren Fletcher	Tottenham Hotspur	302
49 Popsi Kananurk	West Ham United	302
50 Richard Johnson	Leeds United	299
51 Robin van der Laan	Derby County	299
52 Jason Eust	Wimbledon	291
53 Robbie Fowler	Liverpool	289
54 Neil Redfern	Wimbledon	289
55 Stewart Castledine	Wimbledon	289
56 Andy Simon	Tottenham Hotspur	285
57 Steve Lomas	West Ham United	271
58 Alan Wright	Aston Villa	270
59 John Scalls	Tottenham Hotspur	269
60 Gary Newbery	Blackburn Rovers	267
61 Spencer Prior	Leicester City	264
62 Danny Williamson	Everton	264
63 Mark Walters	Blackburn Rovers	264
64 John Harrison	West Ham United	263
65 Nicky Eaton	Barnsley	254
66 Colin Calderwood	Tottenham Hotspur	254
67 Iain Dowie	West Ham United	254
68 Alan Shatter	Newcastle United	251
69 Lee Sharpe	Derby County	249
70 Marc Ewerton	Crystal Palace	219
71 Gianfranco Zola	Chelsea	210
72 Mike Whelan	Leicester City/Bolton	15

INTERNET LEAGUE

1 Mike Madden	Poachers never change	777
2 Mary Ann Kennedy	Robbie	770
3 Michael Horan	St Patrick's Charloters	697
4 Mary Ann Kennedy	Too Farr	696
5 Graeme Dabnor	St Remy Strikers	695
6 P Bown	Ca	691
7 Barbo Papa a la Bacon	Novote Spoilers	685
8 Chris Forde	Game of Two Pints	685
9 Graeme Dabnor	St Remy Streetfighters	683
10 Jeremy Dwyer	Nudge Nudge Wink Wink	680
11 Susan Makin	Spud 2	678
12 Brian O'Hare	The Warriors	678
13 Andy Robson	Survivors	677
14 Michael Huddleston	Pulp Faction III	672
15 Philip Ward	Wannabe Heroes XI	669
16 Andrew Bates	Wetherby Racing 7	668
17 Mike Madden	MMM Fantasy Leaguers	666
18 Mary Ann Kennedy	Ollrig Pack RNG	663
19 Andrew	United United	662
20 Graeme Dabnor	United United	662

HOW THE SCORING SYSTEM WORKS

All 1997-98 matches in the FA Carling Premiership, FA Cup, Bot's Scottish League Premier Division and Tennants Scottish Cup count for points. Penalty shootouts do not count but results decided in this way will count for managers.

POINTS AWARDED

Goalkeeper	Keeps clean sheet (per half)***	+3 points	Shiller	Scores goal	+2 points
Saves penalty		+1 point	All players	On winning side	+1 point
Scores goal		+20 points	Appearance		+1 point
Full back/Central defender		+1 point	Scores hat-trick		+10 bonus
Keeps clean sheet		+3 points	Manager		+3 points
Scores goal		+4 points	Wins		+3 points
Midfield player		+1 point	Draws		+1 point
Keeps clean sheet		+1 point			
Scores goal		+3 points			

POINTS DEDUCTED

Goalkeeper	Booked	-1 point
Concedes goal	Concedes penalty	-1 point
Full back/Central defender	Misses penalty	-1 point
Concedes goal	Saves own goal	-1 point
All players	Manager	-1 point
Sent off	Team loses	-1 point

*** Must have played a complete half in the match to earn +3 points. * Must have played for 75 minutes in the match. † Must have played for 45 minutes in the match.

IT'S NOT TOO LATE TO ENTER ITF

£1,000, a signed Mitre football and a Mitre Sports bag, and tickets to a premier league match of your choice can be won every month, plus the chance to win £10,000 in a separate FA Cup League so enter the ITF now.

The manager of the month can be won by any team, no matter where it is in the overall ITF league. The prizes simply go to the person whose team scores the highest points in any one month. If you are a student or a woman (18 or over) you may also enter the appropriate mini-league, while under-18 year olds enter the Youth League. These all carry separate monthly prizes.

By entering the ITF, your team will automatically be entered into a separate FA Cup League. Your players will earn you points for the FA Cup League (Littlewoods FA Cup and Tennants Scottish FA Cup) as well as the main ITF League.

Remember the earlier you register, the more transfers your team will be allocated.

HOW TO ENTER

Entries to ITF via The Times are now by phone only, on **0891 405 011**

From the Republic of Ireland only +44 990 100 308

- You must use a Touch-tone (DTMF) telephone (most push-button telephones with a * and a hash key are Touch-tone).
- Choose 1 goalkeeper, 2 full backs, 2 central defenders, 4 midfielders, 2 strikers and a manager.
- Do not spend more than 35 million.
- Do not choose more than two individuals (2 players or 1 player and 1 manager) from any one club.
- Once you have chosen your team, call the entry line, above, and follow the step-by

Full guide to players in both ITF leagues

Fed up with your selections not coming up trumps? One entrant has staked all on a team with a theme

Tim Morgan, a freelance sound engineer and radio producer, is one of a number of ITF competitors who has eschewed the chance for personal glory and, indeed, financial gain (details of this month's £1,000 monthly prize-winner appear opposite) in favour of submitting himself to the self-imposed disciplines of the theme team.



Not for him the freedom to select from the flower of British-based footballing talent: he restricted himself, from the outset, to current and former employees of Southampton — the team Mr Morgan has followed with the usual mixture of anguish, frustration, disbelief and, very occasionally, delight, for 35-odd years. His all-Saints selection contains some big names — Tim Flowers and Alan Shearer, for instance — but some of the team are not immediately associated with the south coast. Derwis Wise, for example, was a Southampton product who went on to greater glories elsewhere.

send, the former Aston Villa midfielder player, left the ITF player lists on his transfer to Middlesbrough. There is no obvious replacement but scoring points is hardly the main concern.

One apparently insurmountable difficulty is that there is no ex-Saint managing at the top level in England or Scotland at the moment — the days of Alan Ball at Manchester City and Joe Jordan at Heart of Midlothian are long gone — so the incumbent, David Jones, manages the side.

Of course, it is difficult to imagine that his Southampton XI would be complete without Matthew Le Tissier. However, apart from the occasion in the Eighties when, it is said, he signed for Tottenham Hotspur before withdrawing from the deal, and the fact that he has been transferred so often in the fantasies of the tabloids and the nightmares of supporters, that he almost counts as a former Saint, he cannot be included. A shortage of former Dell full backs in the higher echelons means a place for local legend Francis Berrali instead.

We welcome submissions of other theme teams: claims such as "Kenny Dalglish played for us in a testimonial" or "David Beckham came on for two minutes as sub for our youth team" when he was twelve should be backed up by written evidence. Anyway, why stop at players' former clubs? Can anyone, for example, spot the connection between the following, and complete the side? Jim Smith (manager); Ed de Goey, Frank Leboeuf, Antonio Lombardo, Ian Wright, Dion Dublin...



Spot the theme and complete a team with the obvious common characteristic

THIS WEEK'S MOVES

OUT			
22703	Simon Charlton	Southampton	£0.75m
41101	Aljosa Asanovic	Derby County	£2.5m
IN			
42905	Frank Lampard	West Ham United	£2.5m

HOW TO MAKE A TRANSFER

- YOU MAY transfer as and when you wish according to your team transfer allowance. If a player or manager moves teams during the season, it may affect the composition of your team. You may adjust your team by using the transfer system, to avoid missing out on points.
- EACH TEAM that was entered at the start of the season was allocated 60 transfers for the season and each team registering after that date had its number of transfers reduced by three per week up to December 13. Teams registered before noon that day were allocated an extra 20 transfers. Teams registered since then and from now on will be allocated 20 transfers for the rest of the season.
- THE LINE is open now and will remain open for the rest of the season. You may only make transfers by using a Touch-Tone (DTMF) telephone (most push-button telephones with a * and a hash key are Touch-Tone). You will need ten digits for your PIN which you will have to tap in (not speak). Follow the simple instructions and tap in the five-digit codes of the players that you are transferring.
- YOU MAY make up to four transfers per call but may make as many calls as you wish to achieve the required amount of transfers.
- TRANSFERS made before 12 noon on any day will become effective for matches starting after that time. Transfers made after 12 noon will become effective for matches starting after 12 noon the following day.
- YOUR NEW player only starts to score points for you when his transfer is registered. The current score of the player transferred out remains part of your team score but he then ceases to score for you.
- CALLS COST 50p per minute and calls from a telephone box cost approximately twice as much.

Transfer number: 0891 884 628. Outside the UK: +44 990 200 538.

Code	Name	Team	£	FA(w)	FA	LG(w)	Tot
10101	J Leighton	Aberdeen	2.00	0	0	0	7
10201	D Seaman	Arsenal	5.00	7	7	3	67
10301	M Bosnich	Aston Villa	3.00	0	0	2	43
10401	T Watson	Barnsley	1.00	8	8	-11	-27
10501	T Flowers	Blackburn	3.50	1	1	-5	42
10601	K Branagan	Bolton	1.50	0	0	7	42
10701	S Kerr	Bolton	4.00	0	0	0	0
10702	J Gould	Celtic	3.00	0	0	2	50
10801	E de Goey	Chelsea	3.00	-7	-7	3	61
10802	S Ogrtovic	Coventry C	1.50	0	0	0	17
11001	C Nash	C Palace	0.25	0	0	0	0
11002	K Miller	C Palace	2.00	8	8	-2	36
11101	M Poon	Derby	1.50	8	8	3	61
11201	S Dykstra	Dundee Utd	2.00	0	0	2	16
11301	I Westwater	Dunfermline	1.00	0	0	2	9
11401	N Southall	Everton	2.00	0	0	0	3
11501	G Rousseau	Hearts	2.50	0	0	0	47
11601	R Hagan	Hibernian	1.50	0	0	8	4
11802	O Gottskalkow	Hibernian	1.50	0	0	0	4
11701	D Lakovic	Kilmarnock	1.00	0	0	2	19
11801	N Martyn	Leeds Utd	3.50	2	2	0	68
11901	K Keller	Leicester C	3.00	8	8	2	60
12001	D James	Liverpool	3.50	-5	-5	8	65
12101	P Schmeichel	Man Utd	5.00	-1	-1	8	97
12201	S Howie	Motherwell	1.00	0	0	0	0
12301	S Given	Newcastle	3.00	0	0	0	17
12401	A Goram	Rangers	5.00	0	0	8	37
12501	K Pressman	Sheffield W	2.00	2	2	3	3
12601	A Main	St Johnstone	0.50	0	0	0	36
12702	P Jones	Southampton	1.00	8	8	7	20
12801	I Walker	Tottenham	2.50	3	3	3	22
12901	L Mikosko	West Ham	2.00	0	0	0	4
13001	N Sullivan	Wimbledon	2.50	7	7	0	57

Code	Name	Team	£	FA(w)	FA	LG(w)	Tot
30101	B O'Neill	Aberdeen	2.00	0	0	-1	-13
30201	A Jenas	Arsenal	3.00	0	0	1	7
30202	M Keown	Arsenal	3.00	4	4	1	19
30203	G Brindley	Arsenal	2.00	4	4	0	18
30204	S O'Rand	Arsenal	3.00	4	4	1	16
30301	G Southgate	Aston Villa	3.00	-1	-1	0	10
30302	U Eughton	Aston Villa	3.00	-2	-2	0	21
30401	A de Zeeuw	Barnsley	1.00	4	4	-12	-12
30402	A Moses	Barnsley	0.50	5	5	0	-14
30403	M Appleby	Barnsley	0.50	0	0	-2	-10
30502	C Hendry	Blackburn	3.00	0	0	-2	30
30504	S Hendrozz	Blackburn	2.50	0	0	-3	21
30505	S Pedersen	Blackburn	2.00	0	0	0	2
30601	G Taggart	Bolton	1.50	0	0	0	5
30602	G Bergstrom	Bolton	1.00	0	0	4	20
30603	C Fairclough	Bolton	1.00	0	0	0	-5
30604	M Fish	Bolton	1.50	0	0	11	11
30701	E Annoni	Celtic	1.50	0	0	17	17
30702	M Mackay	Celtic	3.00	0	0	2	2
30703	A Stubbs	Celtic	3.00	0	0	0	48
30704	N Rieper	Celtic	3.00	0	0	0	34
30801	R Leboeuf	Chelsea	3.00	-5	-5	-1	24
30802	M Duberry	Chelsea	3.00	-4	-4	0	20
30803	S Clarke	Chelsea	2.50	-4	-4	0	10
30804	B Lambourde	Chelsea	2.50	0	0	1	0
30901	L Dahl	Coventry C	1.50	0	0	0	0
30902	R Shaw	Coventry C	1.50	1	1	-2	12
30903	P Williams	Coventry C	1.50	0	0	-2	-7
31001	A Roberts	C Palace	1.50	5	5	-2	17
31002	A Linighan	C Palace	0.75	5	5	-2	11
31003	D Tuttle	C Palace	0.75	0	0	0	0
31004	H Freiderson	C Palace	1.00	5	5	-2	9
31101	I Stimas	Derby	2.50	0	0	1	24
31102	J Laurson	Derby	1.50	0	0	1	15
31201	S Praisley	Dunfermline	2.00	0	0	0	-14
31301	G Shields	Dunfermline	1.50	0	0	0	-3
31401	S Bilic	Everton	2.50	0	0	-1	-19
31402	D Watson	Everton	2.00	0	0	0	14
31403	C Tiller	Everton	1.50	0	0	1	11
31404	D Weir	Hearts	2.00	0	0	0	25
31501	J Hughes	Hibernian	2.00	0	0	-13	-13
31801	D Wetherall	Leeds Utd	2.50	5	5	-1	37
31802	G Hall	Leeds Utd	2.00	5	5	-2	25
31803	R Molenaar	Leeds Utd	2.00	5	5	-1	19
31804	L Radebe	Leeds Utd	2.00	9	9	-1	23
31901	M Elliott	Leicester C	3.00	5	5	0	49
31902	P Kasmark	Leicester C	2.50	5	5	0	35
31903	S Walsh	Leicester C	2.50	0	0	0	31
31904	S Prior	Leicester C	2.00	5	5	0	11
32001	M Wright	Liverpool	3.00	0	0	0	5
32002	D Matteo	Liverpool	3.00	-2	-2	5	26
32003	B T Kvarme	Liverpool	3.00	-1	-1	0	31
32101	D May	Man Utd	3.50	0	0	0	0
32102	J Berrand	Man Utd	3.50	0	0	-1	4
32103	P Albert	Man Utd	3.50	0	0	0	33
32201	P Hancock	Newcastle	2.50	0	0	0	9
32202	D Pycroft	Newcastle	3.00	4	4	-1	9
32303	S Howey	Newcastle	2.00	0	0	0	1
32304	A Platone	Newcastle	3.00	4	4	0	13
32401	S Ponnini	Newcastle	3.50	0	0	9	37
32402	J Bjorlund	Rangers	3.50	0	0	5	34
32403	L Amoroso	Rangers	3.50	0	0	0	0
32404	R Gough	Rangers	4.00	0	0	4	7
32501	D Walker	Sheff W	2.00	0	0	0	1
32502	J Newsome	Sheff W	2.00	0	0	5	5
32503	P Atherton	Sheff W	2.00	0	0	1	6
32601	S McCuskey	St Johnstone	0.50	0	0	10	10
32701	R Dryden	Southampton	1.00	0	0	3	-2
32702	K Lundekvam	Southampton	1.00	5	5	0	6
32703	K Monkou	Southampton	1.00	4	4	4	15
32801	S Campbell	Tottenham	2.50	1	1	0	2
32802	J Scalls	Tottenham	2.50	0	0	1	3
32803	R Vega	Tottenham	2.00	1	1	0	9
32904	C Calderwood	Tottenham	2.00	1	1	4	11
32901	R Ferdinand	West Ham	2.50	0	0	5	11
32902	R Hall	West Ham	2.00	0	0	0	0
32903	S Potts	West Ham	1.50	1	1	5	10
32904	I Pearce	West Ham	2.00	1	1	5	6
33001	D Unsworth	West Ham	2.00	1	1	5	15
33103	C Perry	Wimbledon	2.50	4	4	-1	16
33002	D Blackwell	Wimbledon	2.50	0	0	-2	15

Code	Name	Team	£	FA(w)	FA	LG(w)	Tot
40605	J Pollock	Bolton	2.00	1	1	1	32
40701	A Thon	Celtic	4.50	0	0	0	23
40702	P O'Donnell	Celtic	3.00	0	0	0	7
40703	C Burley	Celtic	3.00	0	0	1	54
40704	P Lambert	Celtic	3.00	0	0	4	24
40705	P Lambert	Celtic	3.00	0	0	4	24
42503	R Blinker	Celtic	3.00	0	0	0	22
40801	D Wise	Chelsea	3.50	0	0	2	35
40802	R Di Matteo	Chelsea	4.00	1	1	5	40
40803	E Newton	Chelsea	1.50	0	0	0	9
40804	G Poyet	Chelsea	3.00	0	0	0	28
40901	G McAllister	Coventry C	2.50	0	0	0	20
40902	T E Soltau	Coventry C	1.50	0	0	0	13
40903	J Salako	Coventry C	1.50	0	0	0	15
40904	P Telfer	Coventry C	1.50	4	4	4	16
41002	S Palmer	C Palace	1.00	3	3	0	29
41003	D Pritchard	C Palace	0.25	0	0	0	0
41004	P Warhurst	C Palace	1.50	3	3	0	34
41005	A Lombardo	C Palace	3.00	0	0	0	22
41101	A Asanovic	Derby	2.50	0	0	0	6
41102	S Eranio	Derby	3.50	0	0	0	30
41103	D Powell	Derby	1.50	2	2	0	14
41104	C Dally	Derby	1.50	0	0	0	19
41105	R van der Laan	Derby	1.00	0	0	0	8
41106	J Hunt	Derby	1.00	0	0	1	15
41201	R Winters	Dunfermline	3.50	0	0	4	45
41301	A Smith	Dunfermline	3.50	0	0	1	42
41401	G Speed	Everton	3.50	0	0	0	46
41402	J Parkinson	Everton	1.50	0	0	0	28
41403	G Farnley	Everton	1.50	1	1	1	15
41404	D Williamson	Everton	2.00	0	0	0	19
41405	J Oster	Everton	2.50	-1	-1	0	5
41501	N McCann	Hearts	3.50	0	0	0	49
41601	C Jackson	Hibernian	2.00	0	0	3	9
41602	B Lavety	Hibernian	2.00	0	0	0	20
41701	J McIntyre	Kilmarnock	2.00	0	0	0	0
41801	L Bowyer	Leeds Utd	3.00	3	3	1	21
41802	A I Haland	Leeds Utd	2.00	0	0	0	33
41803	L Sharpe	Leeds Utd	2.50	0	0	0	0
41804	B Ribeiro	Leeds Utd	2.50	0	0	1	14
41901	D Hopkin	Leeds Utd	2.00	0	0	0	28
41902	G Parfitt	Leicester C	2.00	6	6	4	21
41903	N Lannon	Leicester C	2.00	3	3	1	39
41904	S Taylor	Leicester C	1.50	0	0	0	0
42001	S McManaman	Liverpool	6.00	1	1	3	66

NEWS

Ulster peace plan is proposed

The British and Irish Governments broke the deadlock in the Northern Ireland peace process by agreeing the outline of a bold new settlement which they described as their "their best guess at what could be a generally acceptable outcome".

Robin Cook travels the world alone

Robin Cook was forced to abandon plans to take his new partner on an official ten-day world tour amid fears that the trip would be overshadowed by his marital difficulties.

Diana garden

The idea of a special garden at Kensington Palace to commemorate Diana, Princess of Wales, has won the backing of the committee considering a permanent memorial to her.

ITV campaign

ITV pledged to halt its audience decline by stealing viewers from BBC1 and breathing life back into the British sitcom.

Selling knowledge

Encyclopaedia Britannica is to disband its direct sales force, bringing an end to the age of the foot-in-the-door book salesman and making way for compact discs and the Internet.

Straw son cautioned

The 17-year-old son of Jack Straw, the Home Secretary, was cautioned at a south London police station after admitting he sold £10 worth of cannabis to an undercover reporter.

Pirates' victim

A woman merchant navy officer told how she was shot twice when caught in crossfire between police and Brazilian pirates who had stormed her ship while she was on nightwatch.

Easy target

Further education students struggling with the mysteries of nuclear physics or German syntax can now opt to wrestle with a more practical subject: the duvet.

Drugs 'palace'

A couple who set up a cocaine-smuggling operation turned their suburban home into a "palace" complete with a butler when the cash started rolling in.

Cautious police

Murderers are escaping justice because detectives are too slow and cautious, says one of Britain's senior policemen.

Always on a Sunday for the Hague

William Hague revealed his plan for a successful marriage, by scheduling time with his wife in the same efficient way he timetabled his political ascent.



Hana Cerna of the Czech Republic is surprised by a duck touching down in a Perth swimming pool after a World Championships race

BUSINESS

Output falls: Manufacturing output fell unexpectedly in November and was unchanged in three months ago, showing clear signs of exchange rate fatigue.

Sales: A last-minute Christmas rush appears to have saved high street shops from the slump that loomed in December.

Smith repaid: Tim Smith, the chartered accountant MP who resigned his House of Commons seat over his involvement in the cash for questions affair, has been let off with a reprimand by the Institute of Chartered Accountants.

Markets: The FTSE 100 fell 69.5 to 5068.8. The pound rose to 103.9 from 103.6, rising 36 cents to \$1.6183 and .47 pfennig to DM2.9438.

SPORTS

Rugby union: London Scottish have cited the Bath front row after the biting incident which left their Australian flanker Simon Fenn with more than 25 stitches in his left ear.

Football: Terry Venables has agreed to leave Portsmouth after accepting an offer under which he will sell his 51 per cent controlling interest in the club.

Swimming: China powered its way to the top of the medal table on the first day of racing in the pool at the world championships, winning a quarter of the medals.

American football: Green Bay Packers, winners of the Super Bowl last year, will return to the showpiece event when they meet Denver Broncos.

ARTS

Wearing well: As an exhibition of her work starts a national tour, the Turner Prize winner Gillian Wearing impresses Richard Cook again with her humanity.

Together at last: A small piece of musical history was made on Sunday when Bernard Haitink appeared to conduct the London Symphony Orchestra for the first time.

Hello, lads: Saturday night in Glasgow and The Verve kick off their British tour with what should have been a triumphant comeback but wasn't quite.

Having a ball: After a six-month absence from the Royal Ballet Dorey Bussell delighted her fans with a Festival Hall radiant performance as Cinderella.

OPINION

Sound advice: Jason Quick says that an ultrasound scan might have saved his baby.

Right script: Dr Thomas Stuttaford on the anti-depressant that had a part to play in the story of Britain's most successful novelist, Dame Catherine Cookson.

Where's the beef: In some parts of America, bad-mouthing beef is illegal. Oprah Winfrey is being sued for \$7 million.

Twister: Among small firms, the North-South divide has taken an unexpected twist.

Hong Kong hope: He is Chinese, 49, and British-educated: the new Hong Kong Chief Justice.

Euro-watch: Why business must pay more attention to the European Court of Human Rights.

A few weeks after Unesco's universal declaration on the human genome the protocol established by the Council of Europe and intended to forbid the cloning of human beings constitutes the first international judicial barrier erected in the face of the real or imagined threat of cloning among mammals.

Anonymity in court: Cardinal Hume: traffic levels: sponsorship for rare animals: Tippet: common law families: Millennium Dome: football rowdies.

Le Monde



TOMORROW IN THE TIMES

INTERFACE From Space Oddity to cyberspace: the new-look IT section shows how David Bowie uses the Net for his art

CHANGING CREME Secretarial and office appointments in a new 16-page supplement

THE TIMES CROSSWORD NO 20,687

Crossword puzzle grid with numbers 1-28 indicating starting positions for clues.

- ACROSS 1 Flourishing with money invested in an economic upturn (6). 5 Exceed the limit, having run in half-open carriage (8). 9 Pass one needed to attend international sporting event (8). 10 Mix moss as ends drop off plant (6). 11 Careless hit and run (5). 12 Eroded by wave energy spread throughout (8). 13 Conservative suspended, having introduced reforms? (7). 16 Those who survive attack before trial (7). 20 Tip given to daily, perhaps, at start or finish of work (8). 22 Excessively build up an account put in the red (8). 23 Resigned, reportedly, having recognised superior player (6).

DE CAMP STAMPEDE, FORESTALL SPEED, NANNY EVOCATIVE, ANTI-MOTIVATED JOB, TAP CONFEDERATE, PANHASSE SERGE, PAPER TUNER, LANDLADY PLAYERS

AA INFORMATION

Latest Road and Weather conditions, Weather by Fax, World City Weather, Motoring, AA Car reports by fax.

HIGHEST & LOWEST

Table showing highest and lowest temperatures for various locations across the UK.

NEWSPAPERS SUPPORT RECYCLING

Recycling information for newspapers, including a tree logo and contact details.

FORECAST

General: England and Wales will be mild but cloudy and damp with spells of rain, heaviest and most persistent in the North and West. The South and East will see mainly intermittent rain.

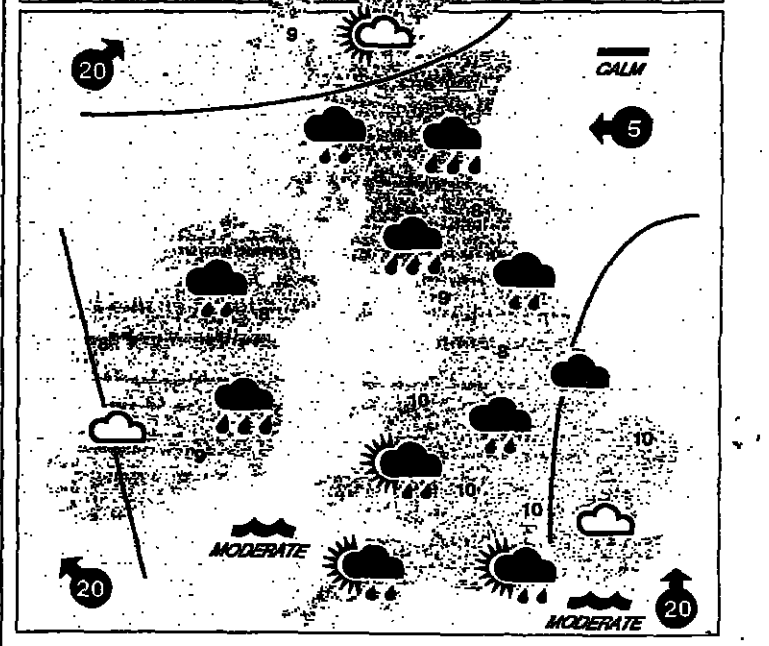
AROUND BRITAIN YESTERDAY

Table showing weather conditions and temperatures around Britain for the previous day.

ABROAD

Table showing weather conditions and temperatures in various international locations.

WEATHER TODAY



Changes to the chart below from noon: high A will drift southeast; low J will move north and fill, absorbing low G; low M will lose its identity; low W will move northeast with little change.



Table showing sunrise, sunset, moon set, and moon rise times for various locations.

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THE TIMES

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INSIDE SECTION

2 TODAY



BUSINESS

Bronwen Maddox on the threat to the IMF's future
PAGE 31



ARTS

Joy unconfined at the return of Darcey Bussell
PAGES 34-35



SPORT

Venables bids farewell to Portsmouth
PAGES 47-52

TELEVISION AND RADIO

PAGES 50, 51

BUSINESS EDITOR Patience Wheatcroft

TUESDAY JANUARY 13 1998

American shareholders stand firm while Hong Kong market plunges

Wall St defies Far East chaos

By JANET BUSH IN LONDON AND OLIVER AUGUST IN NEW YORK

AMERICAN investors put on a display of defiance in the face of another market rout in Asia yesterday, confounding dire predictions that a genuine Wall Street crash was imminent. The backdrop to trading looked ominous. Wall Street had slumped by more than 200 points on Friday as news swept the markets that Peregrine Investments, the leading Asian investment bank, was in trouble and that Hong Kong prime rates were being jacked up sharply.

US Federal Reserve officials, including Alan Greenspan, Chairman, had started to talk about the threat of deflation as Asian economies imploded and investors became alarmed about the impact on US corporate profits. The Hong Kong stock mar-

PEREGRINE INVESTORS

THE offices of Peregrine Investments, the largest independent securities house in Hong Kong, were mobbed yesterday after the group was placed in liquidation (Jason Nisse writes). A statement is due today about what will happen to the group — which employs 200 people worldwide including 120 in the City. Price Waterhouse, the accountant, will be appointed liquidator and is expected to sell the group off piecemeal with the international and corporate finance operations believed to be in demand.

ASIAN INVESTORS

was due to be injected into the firm by Zurich Group. The company had been heavily hit by its exposure to Steady Safe, an Indonesian taxi company to which it had lent \$265 million. Losses from this loan series depleted the group's capital of \$900 million. Peregrine's operations were halted on the Hong Kong market yesterday but were still operating in Jakarta, Taipei and Bombay. In Hong Kong, investors laid siege to Peregrine's offices demanding to transfer their portfolios. Peregrine was particularly well known for investment in the so-called Red Chip stocks, companies with exposure to China.

MARKET REACTION

are not overly dependent on one region. Further, Asia is often a source of production for US companies rather than a key export market. Ms Cohen, whose reputation was secured by her correct forecast of a seven-year US economic boom, said that investors should invest in Microsoft and Intel, both of them volatile recently, calling them "core holdings". Intel's fourth-quarter results statement today will be crucial for sentiment on Wall Street with some traders calling it the "event of the week".

GLOBAL MARKETS

In London, the stock market slumped nearly 150 points before Wall Street opened, but, cheered by the resilience of the US market, climbed back some of the way to close 69.5 points lower at 5,068.8. Outside Hong Kong, the news from Asia yesterday was mixed. Indonesian markets

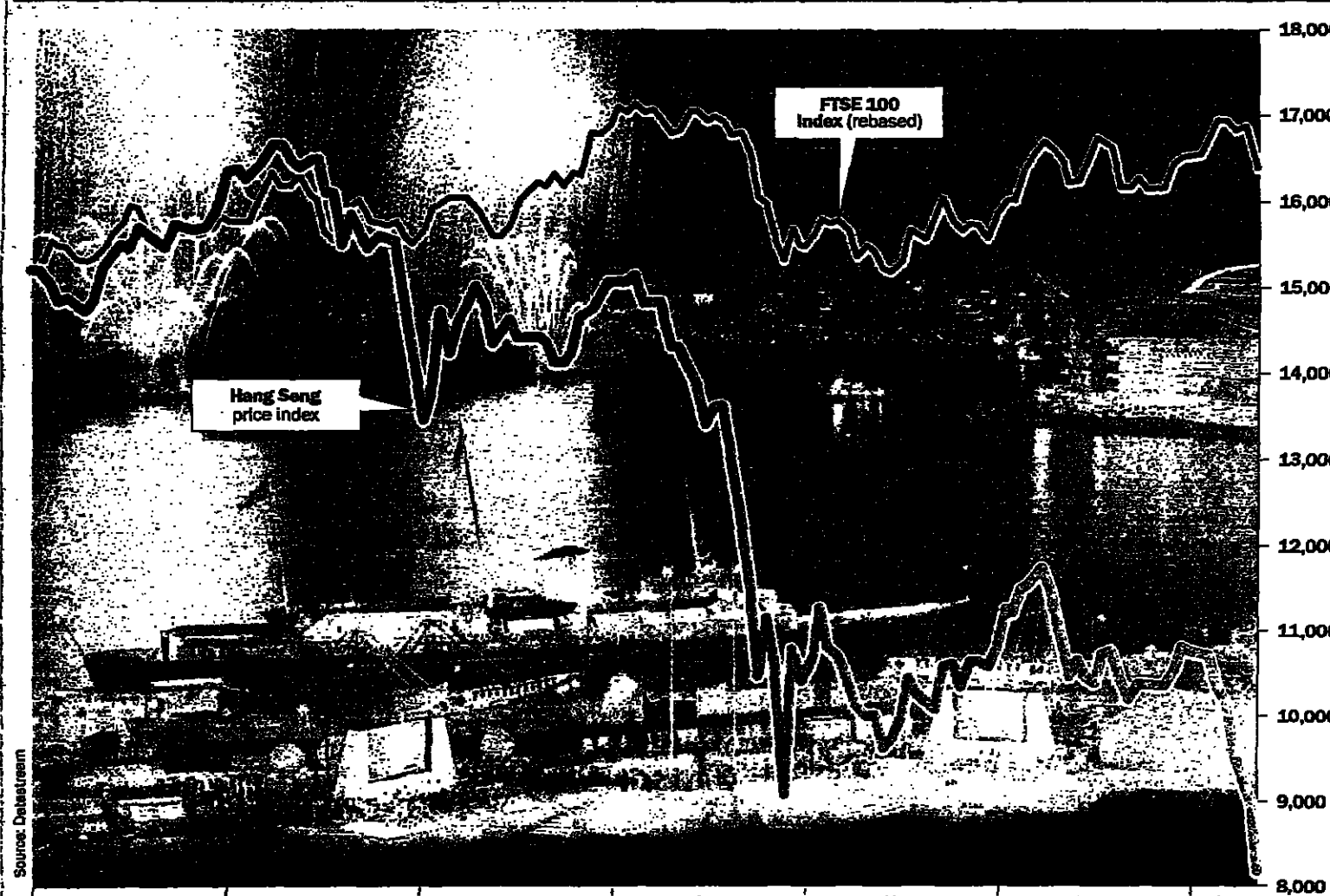
UK's firms start to feel the pinch from turmoil

By JON ASHWORTH

FINANCIAL turmoil in South-East Asia is already starting to bite in the UK, with pension funds, exporters and retailers among the casualties. UK pension funds have £566 billion in funds under management, of which about 6 per cent — or £34 billion — is tied up in the Far East. In London, institutions including Scottish Widows are moving to reduce holdings in UK-quoted companies with exposure to Asia. Standard Chartered, De La Rue, GEC, and HSBC Holdings, owner of Midland Bank, are among stocks perceived as vulnerable.

Currencies such as the Thai baht have virtually halved in value against the pound. The impact is being felt at BAA, the airports operator, which has seen a dramatic decline in sales of luxury goods at Heathrow. Stores in London have noticed a drop-off in spending by Japanese visitors, according to the British Retail Consortium. It is seen as largely a London phenomenon, and the flip side will be cheaper manufactured goods from Taiwan and South Korea, including sports shoes, toys and electrical appliances.

FROM HANDOVER TO DESPAIR



There is a further threatened knock-on impact in residential property, where companies such as Regalian have actively courted investment from Hong Kong and Singapore.

Investors have been drawn to the United Kingdom by high yields, and its perceived status as a "safe haven". Ruth Lea, head of the policy unit at the Institute of Directors, said UK exporters face growing competition from "cheap" Asian goods, when seeking to win orders in

UK manufacturing output hit by bout of Asian flu

By JANET BUSH, ECONOMICS EDITOR

UK manufacturing showed clear signs of exchange rate fatigue and Asian flu in November, with activity now stagnant for three months, according to the Office for National Statistics (ONS). Manufacturing output fell unexpectedly by 0.4 per cent in November and was unchanged on three months ago. Industrial production, which includes the output of Britain's energy sectors, fell 0.6 per cent. City economists argued against a further rise in inter-

est rates in view of clear signs that sterling's long period of strength and the collapse of demand from Asia is starting to have a damaging effect on industry. Simon Briscoe, an economist with Nikko Europe, said: "Further monetary tightening, against a background of weakening demand from Asia, could tip manufacturing into recession." Interest rate markets were in no doubt about the meaning of yesterday's figures. The March short sterling future

Last-minute Christmas rush rescues retailers

By FRASER NELSON

A LAST-MINUTE Christmas rush has saved Britain's high street shops from the slump that loomed in the first two weeks of December, according to data from the British Retail Consortium. Record spending in the last three days before Christmas lifted high street spending 7.9 per cent last month, the BRC said, suggesting that retailers took in £25 billion over the whole month. A much stronger sales period helped underlying sales to

grow 4.8 per cent, it continued — creating bargains which eroded inflationary pressure by keeping overall prices at a more or less steady rate. Next, Britain's third largest menswear chain, added to the optimism by turning in takings 16 per cent ahead of last December from 11 per cent more store space. Its catalogue division took in 32 per cent more money from a customer base that grew 21 per cent. The BRC's members speak for half of UK retail spending,

and almost all the large chains. Although the news was received positively in the City, retailers shares were dragged down by the gloom in the FTSE 100. Jarvis Hotels said it had an excellent Christmas, with sales up 25 per cent. Its shares added 2p to 149.2p. Wm Morrison, the supermarket chain, said its takings were 10.5 per cent higher, with underlying growth of 5.2 per cent.

BUSINESS TODAY

STOCK MARKET INDICES	
FTSE 100	5068.8 (-69.5)
Yield	3.27%
FTSE All shares	2380.32 (-31.83)
Nikkei	14664.44 (-330.65)
New York	
Dow Jones	7816.54 (+36.12)
S&P Composite	930.93 (+3.24)

GBP RATE	
Federal Funds	5 1/4% (5 1/4%)
Long Bond	105 1/2% (105 1/2%)
Yield	5.71% (5.73%)

LONDON MONEY	
3-month interbank	7 1/4% (7 1/4%)
Life long rate	12 1/4% (12 1/4%)
Future (Mar)	

STERLING	
New York	1.6225 (1.6128)
London	1.6185 (1.6149)
DM	2.9433 (2.9395)
FF	6.8823 (6.884)
SP	2.3885 (2.3847)
Yen	218.28 (212.40)
£ Index	103.9 (103.9)

DOLLAR	
London	1.6175 (1.6220)
FF	6.8823 (6.884)
SP	2.3885 (2.3847)
Yen	132.79 (132.03)
\$ Index	110.6 (109.9)

MONTHLY OIL	
Brent 15-day (Mar)	\$15.55 (\$15.60)

GOLD	
London close	\$278.65 (\$278.15)

* denotes midday trading price

ICA fines Smith over 'cash for questions'

By ROBERT BRUCE

TIM SMITH, the chartered accountant MP who resigned his House of Commons seat over his involvement in the "cash for questions" affair, has been let off with a reprimand after disciplinary proceedings brought by his professional body, the Institute of Chartered Accountants. The decision has surprised many observers who felt that the institute had little choice but to ban Mr Smith from working as an accountant in an attempt to assuage public opinion after criticism that its disciplinary proceedings lacked teeth. Instead, the tribunal "acknowledged the substantial positive contribution that the defendant had made to the profession in the wider sense over a very long period of time". Mr Smith, who was the institute's parliamentary and law secretary for three years from 1979-82 and had been a prominent member of the institute's council, was found guilty of misconduct and fined £1,000 with a further £2,150 costs. The tribunal found that between May 1987 and January 1989 he "improperly accepted and/or concealed cash payments from a third party in the approximate sum of £18,000 in return for lobbying services", failed to enter the financial interest in the Register of Members' Interests and failed to declare his interest when dealing with ministers and officials "in relation to issues concerning the third party".

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Peregrine's short flight and spectacular fall

PHILIP TOSE used to be a racing driver — an activity which he claims taught him more than one year at Harvard Business School. But his career was ended by a crash that put him in hospital for four months. Now a crash of a different sort has led to Peregrine Investments, the securities firm he founded, falling from the skies.

Peregrine has only existed for ten years, since it was founded with just \$38 million (£24 million) of capital by Mr Tose and Francis Leung, a colleague from the Hong Kong arm of Citicorp Scrimgeour Vickers, then a leading City broker.

Although Mr Tose was an experienced operator with a long pedigree, his colleague Mr Leung was just 32. But Mr Leung was Cantonese with strong contacts in the Chinese community. Mr Tose had realised how important this was, having built a relationship with the Chinese entre-

preneur Li Ka-shing whom he met in 1975. Mr Li became Peregrine's largest client and as he had long been close to the mainland Chinese, Peregrine became the conduit for a large amount of investment in Hong Kong. Much of this came through Citic Pacific, the mainland Chinese-controlled investment group. Mr Li invested in Peregrine.

After the Tiananmen Square massacre in 1989, most Western firms pulled out of China but Peregrine increased its exposure. In the run-up to the British withdrawal from Hong Kong, Peregrine was in an increasingly strong position. Mr Tose boasted of an annual turnover exceeding

\$20 billion only a year ago. Peregrine had bought a 25 per cent stake in Invesco, the fund manager, and helped to plot its recovery, selling out with a nice profit 18 months ago.

The seeds of its demise were sown less than four years ago. Mr Tose decided Peregrine needed to expand into the bond market. He hired a team from the Hong Kong office of Lehman Brothers, led by André Lee, a youthful and aggressive Korean-American. Mr Lee was rumoured to have received a signing-on package of \$2.9 million and had full autonomy over his business. By late last year this department has built up a bonds portfolio worth \$500 million.

Mr Lee struck a deal with PT Steady Safe, an Indonesian taxi company run by a local businessman, Jope Widjaya. Steady Safe was hoping to expand into ferries and toll roads. Last year Peregrine agreed to back a fundraising for the company. A share issue was planned on the Jakarta stock exchange, and Peregrine agreed to make a bridging loan to Steady Safe.

Last week Mr Tose claimed he actually was not aware how large Peregrine's exposure to Steady Safe had become. The final figure was \$265 million — nearly a third of the total assets of Peregrine. With the collapse in the Indonesian rupiah,

and the failure of Steady Safe to launch its share issue, this loan has become virtually worthless.

All the time the Steady Safe deal was going wrong, Peregrine was attempting to negotiate a deal to inject up to \$200 million in the group. After talks with First Chicago and Deutschebank came to nought, an agreement was struck with Zurich Group, the Swiss financial company. Peregrine was constantly issuing denials that a black hole existed, while Hong Kong was awash with stories of deals going sour with a fish commodity trader in Burma and a Vietnamese car dealer. Even yesterday Mr Tose claimed that it was the fall of the rupiah, not Steady Safe, that led Zurich to pull out.

But whether it was a victim of the Asian crisis, or a rogue deal, matters little now. The brief but soaring flight of the Peregrine is over.

Rate rise fear hits optimism in financial services

By Alasdair Murray, Economics Correspondent

FEARS that interest rate rises are beginning to hurt the financial services sector grew yesterday after a survey showed that business optimism has fallen for the first time in over two years.

The CBI/Coopers & Lybrand survey of the financial services sector found that 25 per cent of firms are less optimistic about their economic prospects than in the previous quarter, compared with 16 per cent who said they were more optimistic.

This leaves a net balance of 9 per cent reporting a fall in optimism, compared with a balance of 61 per cent a year ago who believed business

would improve. The sharpest fall in confidence was amongst finance houses, banks and venture capital firms while building societies and life insurers continued to express confidence about the future.

The CBI said that the decline in optimism reflected concern about interest rate rises in the United Kingdom as well as fears over the knock-on effect of the economic crisis in the Far East.

Economists added that the survey should further ease the pressure on the Bank of England to make further rate rises as it would help allay concern about the pace of expansion in the services sector.

Business volumes also rose more slowly, rising at their lowest rate since March 1996. Finance houses and general insurers actually suffered a fall in business.

Sudhir Junankar, associate director of economic analysis, said: "Expectations are the least positive since mid-1995 suggesting that financial services companies are set to see a fairly subdued pace of expansion compared with the buoyant conditions over the past year."

However, employment levels grew at their fastest rate since the survey began in 1989. Fund managers and securities traders reported the largest increases, with only the banking sector reporting cuts in jobs.

Investment in IT is expected to remain at high levels in the year ahead although there has been a decline in intended overall capital expenditure spending.



Silver screen: Mira Makar, chief executive, said that in one year orders had increased from £4 million to £10 million

Competition for current accounts rises

COMPETITION is mounting for market share in current accounts, as Virgin prepares to launch on Friday its bank account to those who are not existing customers of Virgin Direct (Anne Ashworth writes).

The Nationwide Building Society yesterday produced figures showing that customers would have been £1,000 better off if they had switched from an ordinary current account to its Flexaccount in 1997.

Virgin claims it is already attracting customers to its new account from, among others, First Direct.

Triad races to 133% rise in profits

A STRONG order book helped Triad Group, the computer software and systems consultancy, to boost profits 133 per cent in the six months to September 30 (Jennifer Hanawald writes).

Pre-tax profits up from £1.22 million to £2.85 million, easily exceeded analysts' expectations. Mira Makar, chief executive, said that in one year orders increased from £4 million to £10 million while average contract size grew ten times, to between £2 million and £5 million.

The dividend rose from 1p to 2p. Earnings were 7.53p (3.22p). Since the beginning of December, the shares have soared from 255p to 378p.

Meggitt wins instruments contract from Boeing

MEGGITT, the engineering group, will announce today that it has won a contract worth more than \$100 million (£60.6 million) to supply flight instruments to Boeing aircraft.

It is a big boost to Meggitt, whose shares performed strongly in 1997 after a wide-spread disposals programme. The restructuring was required after the group over-expanded and saw profits fall in 1994, attracting bid speculation in the process.

Meggitt will be supplying back-up instruments, made in Fareham, Hampshire, which

Credit Suisse buys more of BZW

CREDIT Suisse First Boston (CSFB) has mopped up a further tranche of BZW, buying parts of the Asian operations from Barclays for an undisclosed sum.

The consideration is understood to be less than the net assets of the business, which in November stood at £1.4 million. The agreement includes BZW's Taiwan equities business, its 70 per cent interest in the Singapore equities business, one of the stock exchange seats in Hong Kong, and the stock exchange seat in Shanghai.

The deal further includes staff in India, Malaysia and Indonesia working in equity capital markets and mergers

Surveyor predicts strong commercial market

SAVILLS, the surveyor, is predicting a strong commercial property market in 1998 with total returns of up to 20 per cent after a 35 per cent surge in pre-tax profits at the half-year stage. Aubrey Adams, managing director, said that his firm was profiting from the disarray of competitors in an industry suffering severe overcapacity.

Mr Adams said that on current indications staff bonuses for the year could reach the ceiling of 35 per cent of the group's pre-bonus profits. Pre-tax profits leapt from £3

Disarray benefits Savills

million to £4.1 million in the six months to October 31, because of strong growth in fee income from both its residential and commercial agency businesses. Profits are again expected to be weighted to the second half of the year.

However, Justin Roberts, commercial director, said that the industry could be over-manned by as much as a third. He said: "There is still pressure on fee levels. That only comes from overcapacity. We have been approached by medium-sized firms interested in doing a deal but there are a lot

BUSINESS ROUNDUP

First Information cannot pay debts

THE multimedia sector claimed another victim yesterday when First Information, the loss-making electronic publisher, admitted that it could not pay back crippling debts. The company, which produces educational CD-Roms under its FlagTower brand, has suffered a disastrous performance since floating on the Alternative Investment Market at 165p a share in 1996. After a short-lived high of 185p the shares plunged to only 14p in late 1996 as the sector was hit by a crisis of confidence. The company's shares were suspended at 21p yesterday. Shares in rival groups such as The Q Group were also hit by First Information's announcement.

A spokesman for First Information said: "The directors intend to apply to the court for an administration order to be made over the company as it is unable to satisfy its creditors and the directors do not believe that there is a realistic prospect of securing an injection of new funds." James Edmonds, who bought the company from Chrysalis four years ago, and resigned last month, controls an estimated 52 per cent stake in the company. He is thought to have lost more than £17 million on the investment. No one from either First Information or 3i, the venture capitalist backers, were available for comment.

E&G properties sold

ESTATES & GENERAL, the property group, yesterday said that it had sold three properties for a total of £5.2 million. The properties included Somerset Hall, an office building in Bath; a retail space in Barnstaple, Devon; and the Brunswick Industrial estate in Newcastle upon Tyne. The group said that money raised from the disposals would go towards reducing debt. Gearing, which started at almost 300 per cent, is now less than 200 per cent. The sales follow the company's £13.38 million disposal of its retail park in Beckton, East London.

Philips sells subsidiary

PHILIPS ELECTRONICS, the Dutch consumer electronics group, is selling Philips Car Systems (PCS) to Mannesmann of Germany for about 1.4 billion guilders (£424 million). Mannesmann will initially acquire 100 per cent of PCS activities in Germany and America and 65 per cent of further worldwide activities. It will take on the remaining 35 per cent of PCS within two years. The agreement remains subject to approval by the European Commission and US authorities. Philips first announced plans to sell PCS in October.

Yahoo! in Scoot deal

YAHOO!, the world's biggest Internet information company, yesterday confirmed that it is to launch an online joint venture with Freepages, the telephone information group. Freepages, which now trades under the name of Scoot, will tailor its telephone information service for the Internet, and make it a part of Yahoo!'s Web site. The idea behind Scoot is to give consumers a free information service on local products and services, funded by advertisers. Yahoo! is best known for its Internet search site.

PWS moves ahead

PWS, the specialist reinsurance broker, yesterday reported full-year pre-tax profits up 42 per cent to £1.07 million. Lower premiums and a strong pound squeezed margins, but brokerage volumes rose 3.2 per cent to £10.86 million. Peter Smith, group managing director, said it would once again be necessary to increase significantly the volume of the underlying portfolio of business to achieve brokerage growth. A final 0.45p a share lifts the total dividend 15.4 per cent to 0.75p, payable from earnings of 2.22p (1.65p last time).

Cammell Laird soars

SHARES in Cammell Laird, the shipyard group that floated on the stock market last year, reached a high yesterday when it announced a 16 per cent rise in interim profits to £1.3 million before tax in the six months to October 31. Turnover fell from £14.6 million in the corresponding period of 1996, when there was an unusually large order, to £10.5 million. The shares, priced at 100p when Cammell Laird floated last July, rose 15p to 187p. A maiden interim dividend of 1.4p will be paid on February 10 from earnings of 5.2p a share (5.9p).

L&G buys bonds

LEGAL & GENERAL, the insurance company, has bought back 62.4 per cent of its outstanding convertible bonds for a total of £146 million, it was announced yesterday. The offer for the bonds closed on Friday. Of the original £120 million, nominal, of the bonds issued in April 1993, only £33.1 million remain outstanding. David Prosser, chief executive, said the buyback would avoid a further dilution of shares and contribute to dividend growth. L&G shares fell 24½p to 542p yesterday.

Associations favour link

ABOUT 75 per cent of the members of two leading London insurance associations have voted in favour of a merger. Members of the Institute of London Underwriters (ILLU) and the London International Insurance and Reinsurance Association (LIRRA) were polled last month to gauge the level of support for the move. The associations said in a joint statement that a definitive vote will be carried out at two extraordinary general meetings once the terms of the merger have been decided.

Buyout for Dexion

DEXION, the UK manufacturer of industrial storage and materials handling equipment, has been acquired from its US parent by a management team for £70 million, backed by Apax Partners, the private equity firm. Dexion, which operates through an international network of 80 distributors, has been sold by Interlake Corporate, the American industrial conglomerate. Neil Coult, formerly chairman of United Texon, has been appointed executive chairman. Dexion's existing management has taken a 15 per cent stake.

BUSINESS TO BUSINESS

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Credit Suisse buys more of BZW

By JON ASHWORTH

CREDIT Suisse First Boston (CSFB) has mopped up a further tranche of BZW, buying parts of the Asian operations from Barclays for an undisclosed sum.

The consideration is understood to be less than the net assets of the business, which in November stood at £1.4 million. The agreement includes BZW's Taiwan equities business, its 70 per cent interest in the Singapore equities business, one of the stock exchange seats in Hong Kong, and the stock exchange seat in Shanghai.

The deal further includes staff in India, Malaysia and Indonesia working in equity capital markets and mergers and acquisitions. Stephen Stonefield, chairman of CSFB in Asia Pacific, said the deal boosted the firm's presence in the region, and brought in a raft of experienced personnel.

He said: "The acquisition increases our market share in Asia while at the same time allowing CSFB to offer local execution capability in Singapore, Taipei and Shanghai."

Barclays announced in October that it would sell BZW, prompting a flurry of opportunistic approaches. CSFB paid £100 million for the European equities and advisory business in November, leaving Barclays with a book loss estimated at up to £400 million.

Surveyor predicts strong commercial market

By CARL MORTISHED

SAVILLS, the surveyor, is predicting a strong commercial property market in 1998 with total returns of up to 20 per cent after a 35 per cent surge in pre-tax profits at the half-year stage. Aubrey Adams, managing director, said that his firm was profiting from the disarray of competitors in an industry suffering severe overcapacity.

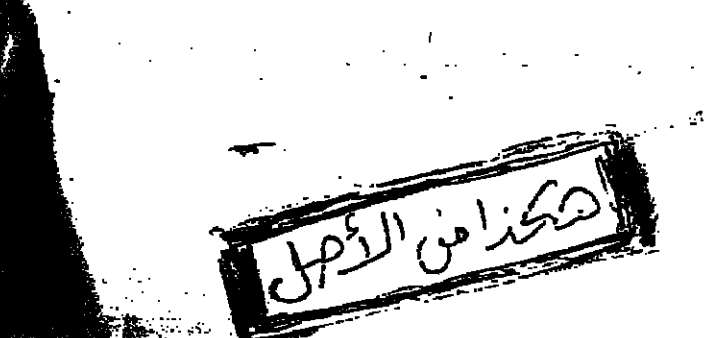
Mr Adams said that on current indications staff bonuses for the year could reach the ceiling of 35 per cent of the group's pre-bonus profits. Pre-tax profits leapt from £3 million to £4.1 million in the six months to October 31, because of strong growth in fee income from both its residential and commercial agency businesses. Profits are again expected to be weighted to the second half of the year.

However, Justin Roberts, commercial director, said that the industry could be over-manned by as much as a third. He said: "There is still pressure on fee levels. That only comes from overcapacity. We have been approached by medium-sized firms interested in doing a deal but there are a lot

	Bank Buys	Bank Sells
Australia \$	2.82	2.84
Austria Sch	21.87	20.01
Belgium Fr	63.79	59.53
Canada C	2.44	2.52
Cyprus Cyp£	0.906	0.894
Denmark Kr	11.78	10.88
Finland Mk	5.45	6.70
France Fr	10.20	9.52
Germany DM	1.75	2.04
Greece Dr	491	452
Hong Kong S	13.37	12.17
India Ru	129	108
Indonesia Rp	1.23	1.15
Japan Yen	6.15	5.50
Italy Lire	3.05	2.98
Japan Yen	223.85	212.10
Malta Lm	4.67	4.61
New Zealand \$	2.86	2.74
Norway Kr	12.75	11.82
Portugal Esc	312.53	290.50
S Africa Rd	6.78	7.82
Spain Ps	202.23	241.50
Sweden Kr	13.20	12.50
Switzerland Fr	2.54	2.32
Taiwan Nts	34.014	32.914
USA \$	1.75	1.82

Notes for small denomination banknotes only as supplied by Barclays Bank. Different rates apply to traveller's cheques. Rates as at close of trading yesterday.

Tempos, page 30



January sale time for shares

COMMENTARY by our City Editor

How long can London and Wall Street hold out against the depression that was pioneered in Japan and is now gripping the most dynamic economies of Asia? Tokyo ignored the 1987 crash, only to suffer worse later on. Today, the West is trying to pretend that the downward spiral of Asian currencies, asset prices, and unemployment is an adjustment or even come-uppance. Each turn of the screw says it is not.

In Hong Kong, this week's special victim, the collapse of the Peregrine investment bank, cries out for the authorities to inject liquidity into the markets. Instead, they are devoted to another battle to sustain their currency's peg to the US dollar. Sales of Hong Kong dollars automatically trigger higher interest rates and a squeeze.

That self-correcting mechanism is the key to a currency board system's credibility. But it will not stop liquidations of portfolios hitting share prices and leading to more portfolios having to be sold. Whether driven by will in Hong Kong, or by IMF diktat in Korea or Indonesia, that is the downward spiral that leads to depression.

Bond traders focus on the silver lining. The prices of oil, most other commodities and of traded goods are tumbling, removing any threat of inflation accelerating in the US or Europe. Short-term interest rates can stay on hold, long-term rates could

come down a further point. Falling yields on US bonds and UK gilts-edged will again drive equity markets higher.

There may be a silver lining. There is indubitably a dark cloud, that will surely rain cold water on overblown equity markets later on, more likely, sooner. The Asian depression will eventually slash the growth of the world economy. Meanwhile, Oriental woes, along with the impact of lower oil and commodity prices elsewhere, will destroy markets for the West's high-price exports and flood markets with cheap Asian manufactures.

Lower growth and lower profit margins in traded goods are inevitable. As this sinks in, the reality will surely be preceded by a realisation that London, Frankfurt and Wall Street cannot continue to defy gravity as all around them crumble. As the Fed's Alan Greenspan realises, deflation includes asset prices.

In New York, the nifty 50 have detached themselves from reality. Even the top 500 shares enjoy ratings that imply rapid profit recovery rather than slowing profit growth. In London, the FTSE-100 index has been driven by an even smaller coterie of banks, drug houses and multi-

nationals. HSBC, once the leader, is now a tainted laggard. Barclays and NatWest do not deserve support. Overall, profits are expected to grow by only 7 per cent in 1998 and that forecast is falling fast. The economy's prospective landing is looking bumper and most of the companies that depend on UK plc have been poor investments for some time. The grand hot-air balloons of the FTSE will surely soon join them on the ground.

A global company? Naff said!

The Far Eastern crisis has already taken more of a toll of some stocks than investors might have anticipated. Who would have guessed that a business that has created a unique niche in producing such essentials as silver covers to disguise the vulgarities of tomato ketchup bottles or the homely

solidity of Marmite jars might be a victim of Asian flu?

Naff, definitely, but surely this is a particularly British brand of naiffness, for those with the taste that would put candlewick covers on lavatory seats but who have the money to use precious metal.

But yesterday jeweller Theo Fennell cited the problems of the Asian economies as part of the explanation for the fact that it will fail to match profit expectations. To appreciate fully quite how dismal the figures are likely to be, it should be noted that the first-half profit had slumped from almost £300,000 to just over £11,000.

This is somewhat galling for those who invested in the shares little more than 18 months ago, when Theo Fennell launched upon the Alternative Investment Market. Yes, that's the one that aims to deliver a higher level of excitement than the main board and yesterday provided plentiful evidence of how it can do just that. Fennell

shares now stand at less than a fifth of the flotation price while Mulberry, another AIM stock, now sells for well below half the price at which it went public last year after producing the grim figures it had already warned it would.

Both companies rank as purveyors of luxury goods but, while Mulberry made much of its international side when it floated, Theo Fennell's talk of being an international brand remained very much in the realm of future ambitions, to be accomplished as part of the scheme that would see it turning over £500 million within five years. Dream on.

When it made its AIM debut, Fennell's marketplace was restricted to Chelsea and Knightsbridge. Investors may want to question Richard Northcott, the serial entrepreneur who chairs the company, about why it has so quickly found itself victim of financially strapped Asians

when sales at Harrods, for instance, continue to grow healthily.

Whatever his reply, the real answer surely lies with those silver fripperies. Investors need to seek out quality companies with quality products, as customers increasingly do. Yesterday Next provided ample illustration of how it's done...

More grist for the Kohl crusher

It takes strong nerves to try to block the path of Helmut Kohl but four German academics have bravely positioned themselves as an obstacle to the steamrollering Chancellor's ambitions. Yesterday the quartet headed to the German Constitutional Court to argue their case that the sacrifice of the mark to European Monetary Union would amount to a breach of the constitution.

This is not a mere attempt at headline grabbing by a bunch of underemployed and over-imaginative individuals. The four, including one former member of the Bundesbank, can argue cogently that entry into EMU is not in Germany's, or Europe's, best

interests. That argument, no matter how much it is accepted by the German population, would not be of interest to the Constitutional Court. So, in order, to have some chance of stopping Herr Kohl's determined move towards monetary union, they have had to resort to technicalities. Their case is based on the claim, a little premature perhaps but destined to be true, that Germany would enter EMU without fulfilling the democratically agreed criteria.

As far as the French and German leaders are concerned, the concept of convergence criteria remains firmly subordinate to the big idea of EMU. The chances are minimal that the academics might persuade the court that the detailed criteria must be complied with or EMU entry abandoned but, as they prepare to face the Kohl crusher, they deserve applause.

It looked like a duck

AMONG the old hands — traders over 25 that is — the collapse of Peregrine is already being compared with Barings. Poor controls, trusted individuals taking crazy risks, you know the kind of thing. In reality the demise of Hong Kong's fastest-growing and biggest home-grown investment bank can more easily be explained by a yet more venerable City rule. If a business looks too good to be true, it almost always is.

Tomkins threat to sell PG&L unless returns improve

By PAUL DURMAN

TOMKINS, the manufacturing group that owns Hovis bread and Mr Kipling cakes, has threatened to sell the division that makes Smith & Wesson handguns if it fails to improve returns substantially.

PG&L, the professional, garden and leisure products division that also includes the Murray lawnmower and bicycle businesses in the US, made an operating profit of only £8.1 million (£8.5 million in the latest half on sales of £217.7 million).

Although this represented a slight recovery in margins to 3.7 per cent, Ian Duncan, Tomkins deputy chairman, said the returns from PG&L remained totally inadequate.

The US bicycle market has been hit by production overcapacity, while the mowers arm has also had a couple of difficult years. Greg Hutchings, chairman, said Smith & Wesson remained a very efficient producer although its sales had also fallen back from the boom that followed the threat of gun control a couple of years ago.

Tomkins said it would extend the £100 million share buyback programme begun

six months ago and would shortly spend the £40 million it still holds in reserve. However, analysts who had been hoping the group would commit itself to buy in £300 million of shares expressed disappointment. In spite of strong interim results, the group's shares fell 10p to 300p.

The City has been keen to see Tomkins find a better use for its large cash mountain, estimated to £188.2 million by the £422 million it spent last year acquiring Stant Corpora-

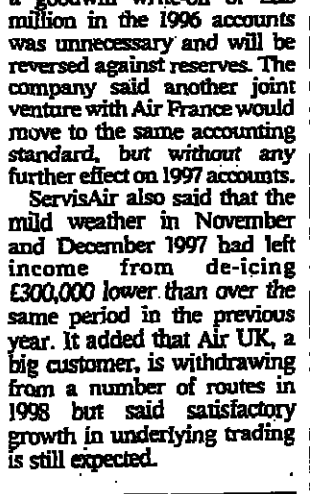
tion, a US maker of wind-screen wipers and other auto parts, and Golden West Foods, the UK supplier burger buns to McDonald's. Mr Hutchings said Tomkins was considering four or five acquisitions, one of which would cost about £200 million.

Pre-tax profits for the 26 weeks to November 1 rose 27 per cent to £214.9 million, on total group sales of £2.5 billion. The rise was almost entirely due to Gates, the US-based power transmission belts business, which contributed £69.9 million, up from £20 million in 1996, when it was only included for 14 weeks.

Tomkins was pleased with results from its food business, which increased profits from £42.6 million to £44.9 million. Milling and baking also "did well" to raise profits by £2 million to £17.4 million in spite of lower wheat costs and selling prices.

The interim dividend was lifted 14.4 per cent to 3.5p share, including 3.06p as a foreign income dividend.

Tempus, page 29



Hutchings interim lifted



Peter Wood, the chief executive, said that Ellis & Everard had coped with a fall in price and a squeeze on margins

Ellis & Everard resists pressures

By CARL MORTISHED

ELLIS & EVERARD, the chemicals distribution group, raised pre-tax profits 6 per cent to £16.5 million in the half year to October 31, in spite of margin pressure caused by the appreciation of sterling against the mark.

Peter Wood, chief executive of Ellis & Everard, said the outlook in the US was favourable but UK volumes would be flat because of the price pressure on chemicals exporters. He said: "We have had to

cope with a price fall and a margin squeeze." Ellis buys chemicals in bulk from leading suppliers and sells them to smaller manufacturers but has seen 20 per cent price declines in certain solvents and a 10 per cent fall in some polymers due to the appreciation of sterling against the mark.

Mr Wood said that volumes were being affected by import substitution because of the strength of the pound. The effect of currency translation reduced reported profits by £600,000.

Ellis maintained its market share despite the pricing pressure and increased sales as a result of acquisitions. Turnover was up from £322 million to £341 million. Earnings per share rose 8 per cent to 12.6p and the interim dividend is up 6 per cent to 3½p.

Turnover in the US, which accounts for 60 per cent of the business, was up 19 per cent and operating profits were 21 per cent with little change in prices. Acquisitions contributed £1 million to the £4.2 million gain in operating profit in the first half.

ServisAir shares in steep decline

By ADAM JONES

THE stock market value of ServisAir, the aircraft maintenance company, dived 25 per cent yesterday as it gave warning that 1998 profits would be hit by the abolition of tax breaks on profit-related pay and by a likely increase in pension charges.

The shares fell 65p to 200p after ServisAir, Europe's largest independent ground-handling company, said the two factors would contribute to a £1.2 million charge in the 1998 accounts. The likely pension rise stems from an actuarial valuation currently in progress.

It also said that 1997 results would be hit by an additional £475,000 charge after a change in accounting treatment of a joint venture with Air France called Heathrow Cargo Handling.

The venture has to be accounted for as a start-up com-

pany, rather than an acquisition. The £475,000 charge will reverse a £405,000 FR57 accounting credit taken in 1996.

The change in accounting treatment will also mean that a goodwill write-off of £2.5 million in the 1996 accounts was unnecessary and will be reversed against reserves. The company said another joint venture with Air France would move to the same accounting standard, but without any further effect on 1997 accounts.

ServisAir also said that the mild weather in November and December 1997 had left income from de-icing £300,000 lower than over the same period in the previous year. It added that Air UK, big customer, is withdrawing from a number of routes in 1998 but said satisfactory growth in underlying trading is still expected.

BA starts biggest SAYE plan

BRITISH AIRWAYS has launched what is believed to be the world's biggest employee save as you earn (SAYE) scheme, offering 60,000 staff in 81 countries the opportunity to buy discounted BA shares (Jon Ashworth writes).

Employees who invest between £5 and £100 a month for three years will be eligible for a tax-free bonus equivalent to three months' savings. They can use the sum to buy BA shares at a special option price set in January 1998 with a 20 per cent discount. Alternatively, they can take their savings plus the bonus in cash, or use part of the sum towards BA shares. The scheme is being administered by Abbey National. Among countries in which BA has a presence, only Oman, Serbia, Zimbabwe and Israel are not participating.

Pace 'unable to meet deadline'

By RAYMOND SNODDY, MEDIA EDITOR

PACE MICRO Technology, the manufacturer of satellite television receivers, gave warning yesterday that it would be unable to produce equipment for the launch of digital satellite equipment before June.

Pace is one of four equipment manufacturers chosen to produce equipment for the launch of BSkyB's 200-channel digital television service. Pace executives said they would be surprised if other manufacturers were further advanced.

Malcolm Miller, the recently appointed chief executive of Pace, insisted: "We will not be able to deliver in this fiscal year." Pace's financial year runs until the end of May. The news raised doubts over whether BSkyB, the satellite venture in which News International, publisher of The Times, has a 40 per cent stake.

would be able to launch its digital service in late spring as announced. BSkyB said in a statement that "hardware and software developments for the set top box are on track to enable the digital launch in the second quarter of 1998".

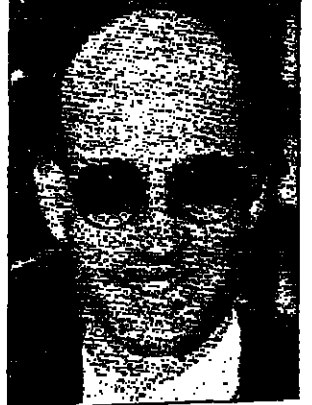
The company said it was confident that significant volumes would be available for the key fourth quarter selling period and promised further details next month.

Yesterday Pace reported tax losses of £12.3 million in the six months to November 30. Profits were £10 million in the first half of the previous year. The pre-tax loss was on a turnover of £86.8 million. The interim dividend is cut to 0.2p a share from 0.9p. Losses were 5.8p a share, against earnings of 3.2p.

Tempus, page 30

Mulberry short of Christmas cheer

By FRASER NELSON



Saul: lost £13 million

MULBERRY and Theo Fennell, two upmarket retailers listed on the Alternative Investment Market, both delivered dismal news to their shareholders yesterday with little to show from the strong Christmas reported by their peers.

Fennell, a jewellery seller named after his main designer, said the absence of demand from Far Eastern customers had hit its outlets in Harrods and in King's Road, Chelsea.

Mulberry, a leather and clothes group, also blamed a lack of tourist spending and the strong pound for its return to the red at the halfway stage with a loss of £720,000 before tax.

Mulberry said it has no plans to slow down its ambitious rollout plan which will see branches open in Istanbul, Dubai and Berlin. To cut costs, its directors have taken a pay cut — and frozen the salaries of their 400 employees.

Roger Saul, its £210,000-a-year chairman, has cut his pay by 12 per cent since October. His 40 per cent stake in the company has lost £13 million of its value since flotation.

Richard Northcott, chairman of Theo Fennell, said the positive picture being painted by jewellers such as Goldsmiths and Ernest Jones meant nothing to his company. He said: "We sell watches for £2,000 — they sell them for £50. The people selling to the British public have had a good Christmas, but we depend much more on people from the Far East

and are far more vulnerable to the strength of sterling. They are international customers and can shop in Paris, New York or wherever they like."

He added that he was "personally optimistic" about the recovery chances — even though the company's market value is now £4.3 million against the £20 million after flotation.

The shares of both companies, which joined AIM in the summer of 1996, dived yesterday. Theo Fennell lost a further 21 per cent of its value, closing at 25½p a share, while Mulberry shares slid 8 per cent to close at 64½p.

City analysts had been expecting bad news at Mulberry but were surprised to learn the extent of Fennell's exposure to Far Eastern businessmen.

Fyffes uses tax change to boost dividend

By FRASER NELSON

FYFFES, the banana importer, is to hand an extra 1r1.9 million (£1.6 million) to its shareholders after taking advantage of tax changes imposed by the Irish Government last month.

The company, which is listed in Dublin and London, has lifted dividend payments 30 per cent — against the normal 10 per cent rise — after returning record results.

Neil McCann, chairman, is to receive 1r705,000 from the payout through his 8 per cent family stake. David Herro, the US investor who led the campaign to oust Lord Saatchi from Saatchi & Saatchi, will receive 1r240,000. Mr McCann said the dividend may rise again in the autumn.

By sticking to its wide mix of supplying countries, Fyffes lifted pre-tax profits 11.5 per cent to 1r£54 million in the year to October 31. It is paying a total of £8 million this year through a 1r2.8p a share dividend. The City expects it to be followed by a 3.08p payout next time.

Last month the Irish Government said it would phase out advance corporation tax over two years, reducing the cost of paying dividends. The company's yield of 2.2 per cent is still a discount to the market average of 3 per cent.

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10

STOCK MARKET



MICHAEL CLARK Stock Market Writer of the Year

Wall Street rally gives a helping hand to London

A STRONG rally on Wall Street acted as a safety net for the London market...

But London began clawing its way back with a helping hand from Wall Street...

The sell-off in Hong Kong brought the usual mark-down of share prices...

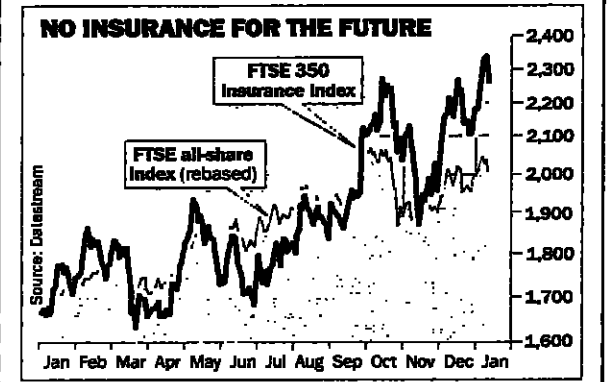
Brokers were cheered by the insurance composites suffered some of the worst falls in yesterday's sell-off...



David Gray, finance director, left, and Derek Coulson, chief executive of Gowring, which advanced 4p to 102 1/2 p

trading statement from Next, which enabled the shares to rally from their low of the day of 70 1/2 p...

Kingfisher advanced 10p to 88 1/2 p before a trading statement today. Henderson Crothwaite, the broker, has come out with a "buy" recommendation...



The insurance composites suffered some of the worst falls in yesterday's sell-off. Their position was further undermined by Credit Lyonnais Laing, the broker, which has again reiterated its "sell" recommendation...

digital television has now fallen from a peak of 235p. A profits warning took its toll of AIM-listed Theo Fennell leaving the shares down 7p to 25 1/2 p...

Shares of Servisair went into a nosedive dropping 65p to 200p. The aircraft handling group says that pension charges and the loss of a major customer were certain to hit 1998 results.

A home win against Sheffield United at the weekend lifted Sunderland 27 1/2 p to 42 1/2 p. The Nationwide first division side is now among the frontrunners...

One of the movers against the trend was AIM-listed KS Biomedica, which formed 1 1/2 p to 115p. The group has developed three types of antibody specifically for use in the treatment of colon cancer.

In the futures pit, the March series of the Long Gilt rose 3 1/2 p to 124 1/2 p as a total of 97,100 contracts were completed. In longs, Treasury 2 per cent 2022 put on 1 1/2 p to 125 1/2 p...

MAJOR INDICES

Table of major stock indices including New York (Dow Jones, Nikkei Average), Tokyo, Hong Kong, Amsterdam, Sydney, Frankfurt, Singapore, Brussels, Paris, Zurich, London (FTSE 100, FTSE 250, FTSE 500), and others.

RECENT ISSUES

Table of recent stock issues including Abbey Natl Dublin, BCO Technologies, Bond Intl Software, etc.

PHOENIX ISSUES

Table of Phoenix issues including Calluna n/p (9).

MAJOR CHANGES

Table of major stock changes including RISES (Dialog, Liberty, etc.) and FALLS (Servisair, etc.).

TEMPUS Savills travels

FEW PROFESSIONS are as accident-prone as surveying. So weak has been the general level of competence that several big names have been close to failure...

from the problems in south east Asia or from a slowdown in the US economy. But with more benefits to come from its purchases of Gates (transmission belts, hoses and connectors)...

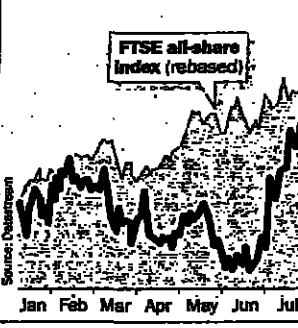
Tomkins

POOR old Tomkins. It makes Hovis bread, bicycles and transmission belts. It also makes Mr Kipling cakes, lawnmowers, McDonald's burger buns, Smith & Wesson handguns, windscreen wipers and much, much more...

the return on investment below its weighted average cost of capital. This concern ignores the fact that Tomkins has broadly diversified its improved operating results it promised from Rank's Hovis McDougall and other deals.

Fyffes

DAVID HERRO may be unmentionable in the Saatchi household, but the US investor should be popular among investors in Fyffes. Fresh from instigating Lord Saatchi's ejection from the family's advertising empire, Mr Herro last November bought a 70 million stake in Fyffes after proclaiming shares in the banana importer ridiculously undervalued.



Pace

PACE Micro Technology seemed like a really good bet when it came to market. It had a real business, real customers and real profits. As a specialist in digital technology its "blackbox" television decoders would soon be in millions of homes as digital satellite, digital cable and digital terrestrial compete to offer viewers more channels.

It has been downhill ever since. The share price collapse has been dramatic - from a peak of 235p Pace was yesterday bumping along at 37 1/2 p. The latest disappointment? An unexpected £10 million in provisions against the possibility of further trouble coming from higher than expected royalty payments.

It sounds and looks awful but the provisions insisted on by new chief executive Malcolm Miller and new finance director John Dyson look like the proverbial kitchen sink. In the end, there will be a business in digital television and Pace could just be approaching the point at which its fortunes turn for the better.

COMMODITIES

Table of commodity prices including COCOA, ROBUSTA COFFEE, WHITE SUGAR, MEAT & LIVESTOCK COMMISSION, and others.

LONDON FINANCIAL FUTURES

Table of London financial futures including Long Gilt, German Govt Bond, Italian Govt Bond, Japanese Govt Bond, etc.

MONEY RATES (%)

Table of money rates for various currencies including Australia, Canada, Denmark, Germany, Hong Kong, India, Italy, Japan, etc.

OTHER STERLING

Table of other sterling rates including Argentina peso, Bahraini dinar, Brazilian real, etc.

FTSE VOLUMES

Table of FTSE volumes for various companies including A&P, ABN, Abbott Labs, etc.

LIFFE OPTIONS

Table of LIFFE options for various commodities including Gold, Silver, etc.

EUROPEAN MONEY DEPOSITS (%)

Table of European money deposits for various currencies including Dollar, Deutsche, French Franc, etc.

GOLD/PRECIOUS METALS (Baird & Co)

Table of gold and precious metals prices including Bullion Open, Close, High, Low, etc.

STERLING SPOT AND FORWARD RATES

Table of sterling spot and forward rates for various currencies including Dollar, Deutsche, etc.

Mkt Rates for January 12

Table of market rates for various currencies including Dollar, Deutsche, etc.

Advertisement for 'Savills travels' featuring a large image of a person and text about travel services.

Consultants look to win favour with Labour

Management consultancy was one of the last Government's favourite business fads. In the late 1980s consultants were all over Whitehall helping to construct the NHS internal market reforms, create the executive agencies and computerise large parts of the Civil Service. Fees totalled billions of pounds as ministers rushed to introduce private sector thinking to the public sector, spurred on by Mrs Thatcher's barely concealed contempt for the Civil Service.

In the past few years, however, the consultancy profession has suffered a fall from grace — much to the pleasure of countless bypassed civil servants. The suspicion that some consultants were more corrupt than cost-cutters was heightened by a series of embarrassing IT failures and a damning report from the Government's efficiency unit. It found that government departments had spent £285 million on outside consultants to produce cost-savings of just £10 million. Kenneth Clarke, hardly a fan of new-fangled business theory, appeared to shift the balance of power decidedly back in Whitehall's favour when, as Chancellor, he asked all ministers to appoint a

departmental watchdog to monitor the use of consultants.

As a result spending fell from £252 million in 1994 to £162 million in 1996. It is expected to have declined again last year. Labour, with its traditional scepticism towards private sector solutions, was expected to maintain this trend. Certainly, it was only too keen to seize on consultancy excesses when it was in opposition and has promised a review — forming part of a wider analysis of procurement policies — with the aim of cutting consultancy costs.

However, the public rhetoric conceals a more positive approach to the consultancy sector. The Labour leadership was only too willing to employ consultants to help with its policy reviews in opposition, while two high-profile MPs — Margaret Hodge and Patricia Hewitt — have professional consultancy experience. For its part, the Management Consultants Association (MCA), the main trade body, approached the party before the election to discuss how to improve relations. The consultants are in the pro-



ALAN REED

cess of producing guidelines for the Civil Service on how to purchase management services and will also provide seminars in Whitehall.

The reality is that the much-maligned management consultant is on the verge of making a comeback in Whitehall. Consultants believe that the decline in work at the tail end of the last Government reflected a dearth of new policy initiatives as much as attempts to control costs. They are confident that the fresh faces in the ministries will revive demand for their skills.

The Ministry of Defence has al-

ready called in McKinsey, the US firm which numbers William Hague among its alumni, to improve its weapon development and purchase systems. However, it is the speed and thrust of Labour's reform programme — especially in the health and welfare sectors — that should guarantee ample employment for consultants.

The big growth in consultancy looks set to come, not in the traditional areas of cost-cutting or IT projects, but in what Alan Reed, head of consultancy at KPMG, terms "change management" services. Labour's reforms will require a change of management culture, creating new roles and organisational structures, within large areas of the governmental apparatus.

However, the consultants fear that persisting solely with the current evaluation apparatus, with its emphasis on cost, could doom many new projects to failure. Brian O'Rourke, director of the MCA, says the obsession with cost has resulted in projects that are less than ideal — but cheap — receiving approval in recent years. It has

also made some of the more successful consultants shy away from public sector work — especially at a time when private sector demand is booming. At the same time, there is still some resistance among civil servants to the use of consultants. They remain uncomfortable with the "touchy-feely" nature of consultant techniques such as "change management", which is hard to evaluate in cash terms.

The dilemma for the Government's procurement review committee will be how to establish guidelines that mould the principle of cost effectiveness and best solution. The committee, led by civil servants, is undertaking a thorough study of procurement measurements with the aim of establishing benchmarks for all departments. The issue of purchasing consultant services is likely to provide a case study.

At this stage, the committee is not relying on any formal external help with the review. However, if it begins to struggle with the brief, it would consider calling upon consultants to help to resolve the problem. Whenever the committee ultimately concludes, it appears that management consultants can only prosper while Labour remains hyperactive.

MARKETING

Clamour for the glamour of sponsorship

It is easy to see why the likes of McDonald's and Strickers pay a small fortune to sponsor top events such as Euro 96 and the World Cup. Millions of people watch a game. They shout, they laugh, they cry. And then they get hungry. It is a simple equation that led to a boom in sales for the two brands over the championships.

However, quite what British Land will get out of sponsoring the British Ski Team or, for that matter, what Andersen Consulting gets from its association with golf remains something of a mystery.

After all, management consultancy and shopping centres are hardly products and services that spring to mind during an event.

Yet an increasing number of businesses are turning to sponsorship as a means of marketing.

Figures out this week will only confirm that investment in sponsorship is growing. Business continues to invest heavily in the arts. Tomorrow's figures from the Association of Business Sponsorship of the Arts are expected to show that 1997 saw a significant rise on the previous year's total of £80 million. And in sports, sponsorship rose by nearly 7 per cent to £322 million in 1997, according to figures from research group RSL-ipsos.

Karen Earl, managing director of the eponymous sponsorship agency, explains why brands with little or no consumer franchise are turning to sponsorship. "It gives them flexibility," she says. "If you're buying into a sponsorship property you can do so much more with it: PR, advertising, merchandising or sales promotion."

It is this multi-faceted side to sponsorship that explains the presence of such names as BTR, UPS and Hewlett Packard as sponsors of big sporting and artistic events.

But if sponsorship is unable to provide a shot in the arm for sales, what do these companies get out of it?

"It's not as black and white as selling something," says Nigel Currie, a director of Craigie Taylor, sponsorship consultants. "By getting involved in something exciting you're moving your company into a more glamorous world."

Which is exactly what happened to the mundane-sounding BTR last autumn. Its sponsorship of the Thrust rocket car's world

land-speed record gave BTR huge exposure. Although the BTR connection fit also donated high-tech wheels and batteries) was, in all probability, lost on the majority of viewers, it sent a clear message to key investors in the City.

Stuart Gendall, BTR's corporate communications manager, says it put BTR, which until recently was an industrial conglomerate stock, on the "engineering map". "It underlined to analysts our commitment to be a major engineering company rather than to be seen just as a conglomerate."

Such publicity coups, however, are rare indeed. The majority of companies make do with less.

But, argues Karen Earl, as long as a company knows from the beginning what it sets out to achieve sponsorship can work at different levels. Next month British Land, the property developer, takes the British Ski Team to Nagano in Japan in preparation for the Winter Olympics. For Chairman John Ritblat — a keen skier — it will provide a unique opportunity for flying the flag and showing an altruistic side to his company's nature.

Ritblat is keen to endow his company with some of the excitement of the event. It is that distinguishing factor in business that might make a vital difference.

He said: "Just say we had a Eurobond issue and we're talking to potential investors they might say: 'Hang on, you're British Land; didn't you sponsor the ski team? It makes a connection which might just swing it for us.'"

If sponsorship ever needed to establish its credentials then it need look no further than Ernst & Young's arts programme. Its recent sponsorship of the Cezanne show at the Tate Gallery provided the perfect opportunity to lure its best contacts to a private viewing and let its partners loose to network furiously. It also gave Ernst & Young that marketing edge over rivals.

Julian Lee, corporate marketing director, plans to repeat the success again with the sponsorship of next year's Monet exhibition at the Royal Academy. "You would be hard pushed to remember who took you to Wimbledon or Ascot but you'll never forget who took you to a private viewing of Monet."

JULIAN LEE

IMF's future dependent on successful end to Asian crises



AMERICAN AGENDA BRONWEN MADDOX

As senior officials from the International Monetary Fund and the US Government fly out to tackle the worsening Indonesian crisis, the IMF faces a storm of criticism over its Asian strategy, which could jeopardise its future.

On the face of it, the Clinton Administration and the IMF are acting in close partnership, throwing their top officers into the stabilisation effort. Larry Summers, deputy US treasury secretary, was due to arrive in Jakarta yesterday, to join Stanley Fischer, the IMF's first deputy managing director, to be followed by Michel Camdessus, the fund's managing director.

But despite this alliance, the question remains of whether the IMF can count on the US's future financial support, given the rising hostility of a sceptical and inward-looking Congress.

The short answer to whether the IMF can pay for its commitments in South-East Asia without more US money is yes. But unless it can do so in a way that persuades Congress to cough up more funds, this could be the last hurrah for the IMF. The Asian crisis will have cleaned out its coffers to the point where, without replenishment by key donors including the US, it could mount only one more rescue on a comparable scale before running out of cash.

The amounts of money pledged in recent months to South-East Asian countries, in packages led by the IMF, dwarf most previous interventions. Of the \$55 billion-plus (£33.3 billion) pledged to South Korea, \$21 billion comes directly from the IMF; the rest from the



Stanley Fischer, left, and President Suharto of Indonesia will be hoping for a resolution to the country's financial crisis

World Bank, Asian Development Bank and contingency loans from individual governments. The IMF is also responsible for \$15 billion of the more than \$40 billion committed to Indonesia; \$4 billion of the \$17.2 billion to Thailand; and all of the \$1 billion to the Philippines.

Of the total of the IMF's commitment — \$30 billion — it has already paid out almost half: the rest falls due in the coming months. Taking account of its commitments, the IMF still has between \$40 billion and \$45 billion in the kitty.

But at the IMF's annual meeting in Hong Kong in September, before the Asian crisis had fully manifested, donors estimated that for the fund to meet likely obligations in the next five years it would need an injection of about \$287 billion.

Of this, the US contribution, which would need approval by Congress, is just over \$30 billion. That is why, in handling this most tortuous of interventions, the IMF has also been forced into defending its existence. That political task is complicated by the complexity of the financial problems, and by the cacophony of criticism, much of it conflicting.

Much of the detailed criticism has focused on whether the fund's choice of strategy in the afflicted countries is likely to restore their health. In particular, it has been attacked for its insistence on maintaining high interest rates in a bid to stop the currencies continuing their slide; critics charge that this jeopardises the survival of otherwise healthy businesses. But bitter as the argument has been,

it will turn in the end on whether the currencies are prevented from freefall.

The crisis has also provoked broader questioning of the IMF's institutional framework, put most vigorously by Jeffrey Sachs, head of the Harvard Institute for International Development. He complains that its decisions lack transparency and are shielded from public scrutiny, even after they are made, by the lack of public documentation. He argues that this is all the more worrying because of the naivety and ignorance about the economies in question. In an essay in the *Financial Times* in December, he caustically quoted IMF reports, published shortly before the Korean and Thai crises sur-

passed, which praised the countries respectively for their "envious fiscal record" and "remarkable economic performance".

In its defence, the IMF points out that it has no mandate to provide detailed analysis, other than in countries such as the Philippines where it already had a programme in place. It also argues, with some justification, that the repeated task of justifying its need for donations imposes regular scrutiny of its performance.

It is a third line of attack, by no means the most reflective, which is likely to prove political: the most troublesome for the IMF. Nationalistic elements in Capitol Hill, within both Republican and Democratic parties, are using the headline-grabbing bailouts to call into question the entire purpose of the fund. Jack

Kemp, the unsuccessful 1996 candidate for Vice-President, spoke for many on the Hill on Sunday when he questioned whether it was worthwhile for the IMF and the US to use taxpayers' money to bail out foreign countries.

Worthwhile for whom, of course, is the question. Given the domestic obsessions of Congress at the moment, an argument based on altruism — that intervention would lessen the impact on Asia of the crisis — will get short shrift. Members of Congress are calling instead for evidence that the IMF's action actively helps US interests.

So far, the easiest justification for intervention — that it is preventing "systemic risk", or worldwide contagion of the financial crisis — appears melodramatic. Those in Congress who support the Administration and the IMF's actions are resting their case instead on the argument that, in softening the blow on Asia, the US is shielding itself from economic slowdown.

A measure of the IMF's political hurdles is the hostility still felt on the Hill to the IMF-led intervention in Mexico in 1995, even though it is widely perceived to have been a success. The package, which provided some \$40 billion, rapidly restored confidence; the emergency loans have been repaid; the cost to the US taxpayer, contrary to predictions at the time, has been zero.

That example does not have the resonance it deserves on the Hill. Important factions in Congress remain hostile to helping Mexico, largely because of the unsubstantiated fear of losing jobs across the border.

Provided the financial demands from the afflicted Asian countries do not attach too sharply once more, the IMF has discretion, and enough money, to approach the task as it chooses. It should, on its past record, win the battle for more funding. But, as its experience over Mexico shows, it is not enough to have right on its side. It needs to produce out of the Asian cauldron an unequivocal success to win the political battle for its future.

End game

FEW analysts are quite as forward thinking as Christopher Wood, the former journalist on *The Economist* whose insights into Far Eastern finance go under the intriguing title: "Greed & Fear". His missives from Hong Kong have been required reading for anyone concerned about the turmoil in Asian markets.

But his circular of last week has to have been the most prescient — bearing, as it did, the headline: "End game in Jakarta." After all, Wood

was writing as an employee of Peregrine Investments, whose own Jakarta games had a rather crushing finality about them.

ON THE bright side for Wood, I have proof that there is life after death. A team from Yamaichi International has found a new home, only weeks after the Japanese broker bit the dust. David Butler, Colin Wright and Gary Woolmer, who were respectively executive director and head of sales (UK & European equities), senior salesman (UK) and deputy head of dealing (UK & European equities) at Yamaichi are now going to ply their trade at that institutional powerhouse, Teather & Greenwood.

Sevens safe

STILL on Peregrine, there was some concern in Hong Kong about the future of that prestigious rugby union event, the Hong Kong Sevens. This annual jamboree, where teams from around the world send a little under half their squad to the former colony for a feast of gouging, stamping and, er, rugby football, is due to take place at the end of March. Last July Peregrine signed up for a three-year deal which would have enabled the organisers to offer \$510,000 (£316,000) worth of prizes, including



\$120,000 which going to the winners of the main trophy, the Sevens Cup.

Peter Duncan, chairman of the Hong Kong Rugby Football Union was philosophical about the matter. "Peregrine's downfall has come as a great disappointment to us but we must all now get on with the realities of life." He says the event has enough money to go ahead this year but is seeking new sponsors. Maybe ING Barings could step into the breach.

BA too direct

BRITISH AIRWAYS has abandoned its campaign against a small financial services outfit after an embarrassing mix-up in the post room. BA Direct, part of the Square Mile group, has operated quite cheerfully for years pro-

viding discount independent financial advice. BA wants the name for its own financial services offshoot, which is rumoured to be planning to link with Eagle Star to sell the latter's products. The airline has claimed the name, short for British Assurance, might give rise to confusion, especially because of the red, white and blue livery BA Direct uses. And the phone number, which contains the digits 737, even if this has been in use since well before the aeroplane type first appeared.

The first sign was frequent visits to BA Direct's Web site by Linklaters & Paines. This is BA's lawyer, as Direct, as I shall call them for convenience, soon discovered. The visits stopped. But recently a report dropped through Direct's letterbox. It came from Linklaters and was addressed to Charles Weiser, BA's senior manager at its financial services business, but at Direct's address. It detailed — well, that had better remain private, but BA had clearly hired a specialist company to monitor Direct's affairs. The letter was sent to its proper destination, along with suggestions that BA might lay off. The airline has now confirmed that no further action will be taken.

Risque eaterie

HUGH CORBETT is on the prowl again, it seems. The *bon viveur* and entrepreneur, who founded the Slug & Lettuce and Harvey Floorbangers pub groups, has been scoring some success with his Top Inns concept, which he launched three years ago and is plan-

ning to float on the AIM. Corbett is close to completing the acquisition of four more pubs in Kingston, Twickenham, Stoke Newington and Islington. He is thought to be paying more than £1 million, and hopes to raise a further £400,000 from private investors for refurbishments.

But this is not enough for Corbett. He is about to launch a new string of rotisserie restaurants, serving only free-range chickens sourced from France, under the name Café Coq. A bit risqué, one might think, but as nothing to the name Corbett planned to give the chain — Hard Coq Café.

JASON NISSÉ



Hugh Corbett, who founded the Top Inns, has another double entendre for his latest venture

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"What with this and the chicken flu, I'm surprised there's any bird life left"

THE FINES

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§Yield calculated as MIP (Monthly Income Plan)

Richard Cork is struck again by the Turner Prizewinner's humanity, as her work starts a national tour

Wearing her art on her sleeve

Anyone who complains that modern art is obscure, ingrown and detached from everyday life should look at Gillian Wearing's work. Throughout the 1990s, the latest Turner Prizewinner has explored other people's experiences with compassion, humour, patience, courage and irony. Her absorbing new exhibition at the Space Gallery in Exeter leaves no doubt about her involvement with the individuals she exposes to steady scrutiny.

Haunted by the memory of a woman with a bandaged face, Wearing decided in 1995 to make a homage. She saw the woman in Walworth Road, South London, lingering by a bus stop and walking down the pedestrian-clotted pavement. Brilliant white, apart from black slits for eyes and mouth, the face of this enigmatic figure "seduced" Wearing and made her feel strangely "related". So she decided to re-enact the scene, swathing her own face in heavy bandages and taking a video camera to record people's reactions.

The outcome, edited into a seven-minute video, is tantalising, dreamlike and impossible to forget. We see passers-by puzzled by the apparition, then ogling her or adopting a studied metropolitan indifference. Nobody talks to her until, outside a garage, she hears shouts from a gang of lurking "Kwik-Fitters". One comes forward and says hello. But he does not stay long enough to talk, and Wearing finally admits that she could not explain her obsession to anyone on the street.

Despite her awareness of urban isolation, Wearing continually attempts to break barriers down. This is the central tension running through all her work, however various the methods and media she employs. Most of the time, Wearing removes herself from the images altogether. Collaboration is her aim, and in an extended early project called *Signs* she invited people in the street to write down their thoughts on paper. The directness of the resulting photographs, where each individual holds up the written message, is remarkable. A smiling and neatly groomed young man, the apparent epitome of sleek success, scrawled "I'M DESPERATE" on his sheet, while one forlorn interviewee claims that "I HAVE BEEN CERTIFIED AS MILDLY INSANE".



"She makes us conscious, all the time, of the human capacity to distort and dream": Gillian Wearing with, in the background, the "police" line-up of her celebrated *60 Minutes Silence*

Although she deals with a notoriously secretive and repressed nation, Wearing manages to pierce our defences, nowhere more than in a 30-minute video where a succession of men and women voice their most private, shameful concerns. She found them in a typically straightforward, unpretentious manner, by placing an advertisement in *Time Out* magazine. It was a risky enterprise, meeting disturbed strangers on her own and leading them to a makeshift studio where they gave vent to often alarming anguish. But Wearing carried the project through with self-effacing tact, skill and sympathy.

Her debt to television documentaries is at its most overt here. But the need to hide the confessor's identities leads her a long way from "fly on the wall" naturalism. Each face, shot in unvarying close-up, becomes a bizarre spectacle. The pain informing many of their revelations is countered by the absurdity of a burgeoning ginger beard, a Neil Kinnock rubber mask or a curly, lop-sided wig. We start out wanting to smirk at these muttering gargoyles. After a while, though, their disclosure of stunted or perverted emotions prevents us from regarding them as macabre entertainment.

Wearing edits the sequence with aplomb, interweaving the more unsavoury revelations with milder confessions, such as the youth who stole a computer from school. But there is no let-up. She passes without a pause from one outpouring to the next, and gives a lot of time to an abhorrent man who delights in making dirty phone-calls to unsuspecting females. Hidden behind an outsize moustache and an eruption of hair, he looks suitably repellent. But his manner is jaunty, and he speaks with curious eloquence about his need for "sex with total strangers". Unlike most of the others, he appears unburdened by the need to exercise guilt. That is why his confession is the most perturbing of all.

Such an unflinching work proves that Wearing is prepared to probe the most distressed areas of the national psyche. But she makes us conscious, all the time, of the human capacity to distort and dream. On one level, she has inherited the concerns of Mass-Observation, that remarkable interwar team of artists, anthropologists, photographers and writers who set out to document British working life. On another level, though, she makes no claims to realism. Her most recent work is marked by a Brechtian willingness to emphasise artifice at every turn. *Sacha and Mum*, a harrowing dramatization of an ambivalent yet destructive relationship, is clearly performed by actors. And Wearing removes them even further from cine-vérité by running the video backwards, heightening the disastrous choreography of alternating affection and violence.

The artifice in her most celebrated work, *60 Minutes Silence*, is less apparent at first. Arrayed in uniforms, the 26 figures assembled in rows look like authentic members of the police force. They are not, and some incensed critics accused Wearing of a "scandalous" hoax when they discovered that actors were involved. But the furor was irrelevant. What really matters is the slowly unfolding shift of power, from the grand, imposing figures in the video projection to its viewers.

Initially, the uniformed ranks seem to be posing for a group photograph. Then, as the minutes go by and nothing happens, they look increasingly like an oppressive surveillance team monitoring our behaviour. Eventually, though, a reversal occurs. They begin to look vulnerable, a stranded group struggling to obey the ridiculous order to remain motionless for a whole hour. Some of them sway, scratch, and glance furtively at their watches. A woman wipes her nose repeatedly, while a man on the front row sinks into a slulk.

Having started out as omnipotent observers, they end up as the observed. We might be tempted to conclude, as the viewing ordeal tests our stamina as well, that Wearing is satirising the phlegmatic British determination to suffer without complaint. But at the end we realise just how strained and deceptive their air of control really was. When the 60 minutes are complete, they explode into movement, and one figure thrusts up his arms and gives a cathartic yell. After the eternity of silence, its shocking force bounces round the gallery like a gunshot.

Gillian Wearing at Space Gallery, 45 Preston St, Exeter (01392 43788) until Feb 14. This National Touring Exhibition (organised by the Hayward Gallery) then travels through the country during 1998 (details 0171-921 0837)

LONDON GALLERIES

Paul Winstanley works hard to bring a sense of place and atmosphere to his painting. After choosing deliberately bland, institutional places to photograph, he paints pictures with a grey-yellow tinge. There are no people, ever. The paintings are of static scenes: a rigid arrangement of plastic-covered chairs around a table; a television room with tiered ranks of empty chairs and single-colour NHS curtains flapping in the breeze; a corridor with barred window behind. The two *Night Office* pictures, with shallow space and a sense of passing through from left to right, convey a sense of tawdry transience. *Viewing Room 1997*, a deeper space with blue chairs and light streaming in through a glass door at the back, is a matter-of-fact picture of a room in a hospital, home, or prison. *Tate Gallery, Millbank, SW1 (0171-887 8000) until Feb 15*

IT MAY be obvious to suggest that lightness of touch can facilitate good painting. John McLean makes sophisticated abstract works and this show of painting on paper suits his approach. Basic principles do not necessarily apply; there is no gravitas, no false simplicity, and yet after looking past the lyrical levity, it is possible to see how controlled yet arbitrary the pictures are. The effect is very unusual. *Francis Graham-Dixon Gallery, 17-18 Great Sutton Street, EC1 (0171-250 1960) until Jan 17*

DESPITE differences of source, place and background, many of the people pictured in *Sightings*, the ICA show of new photographic work, look pretty much the same. This must be due to colour reproduction, lighting and the general air of self-importance that surrounds every unframed, metal-mounted image. It is unwise to generalise, but for nearly ten years the strongly lit, deadpan photographic portrait has carried an uncanny aesthetic unity about it. *Institute of Contemporary Arts, The Mall, SW1 (0171-930 3647) until Mar 15*

SACHA CRADDOCK



The skillfully reduced Sean O'Neil as one John

THEATRE: A complex novel becomes a one-man show

DALE PECK'S moving novel, as multi-faceted as crystal, was published here three years ago under a two-word title that still requires asterisks. Despite the precedent set by Mark Ravenhill's *Shaping and Forming*, Sean O'Neil's stage adaptation keeps the original American title, a proper decision because, though the sex goes through and through the book, its central and overriding concern is one man's continual love and present grief for another. The subject is a relationship.

One man's love? For one other? Not exactly. While O'Neil's performance is arresting and attractive, and in two climactic scenes modulates into passionate feelings which he expresses with very considerable power, his adaptation is nevertheless a one-man play.

Peck's novel, however, is not a one-man, nor yet a two-man, book. It was written in a way that could make it seem a sequence of separate stories. That said, O'Neil creates his reduced version of John with considerable technical skill. Barefoot, usually wearing singlet and jeans, he recalls and re-enacts a bruising childhood, initiation as a boy prostitute, career as porn video star, love and loss. As a little boy — or his mother — the performance darts into camp, and the Henrys sound uniformly gruff. But then, uniformity is the essence of his experience is a theme of the work.

Director Eileen Vorbach lowers the lights for the scene where John is naked on the bed craving anal rape with his 22 gun. Just previously, he speaks his account of Martin's life ebulliently away with the bathwater, one of the most vivid and masterfully written of modern death scenes, with a steady, quiet intensity. He stands like a bird with wings outstretched, between the unseen door and unseen death, motionless, unforgettable.

Jeremy Kingston

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O'Neil's performance is arresting and attractive, and in two climactic scenes modulates into passionate feelings which he expresses with very considerable power, his adaptation is nevertheless a one-man play.

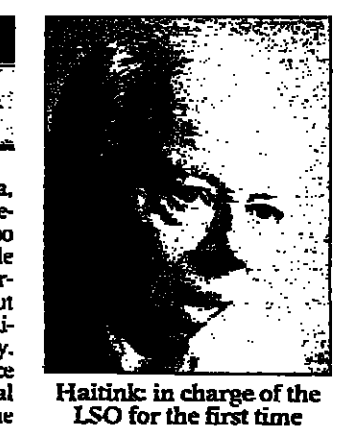
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Jeremy Kingston

A marriage made in heaven

CONCERT
LSO/Haitink
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Haitink in charge of the LSO for the first time

otherwise peerless orchestra, of a perfectly balanced, integrated sound picture. Too often, a seemingly untamable brass department has obliterated vital orchestral detail, but for Haitink those players (minus, perhaps significantly, principal trumpet Maurice Murphy) produced an ideal body of sound, suffusing the texture and imparting a warm glow. Strings and wind contributed, too, to a rare luminosity, offering an unusual perspective on a composer normally associated with block scoring. Such clarity was no mean achievement in acoustics as unsympathetic as these.

The other distinguishing feature of the performance was its organic coherence.

BARRY MILLINGTON

BUILDING A LIBRARY: CARMEN

A guide to the best available classical music recordings, presented in conjunction with the BBC Radio 3 programme

■ BIZET'S CARMEN
Review by John Steane
IN 1965 the posters (for EMI) was a well-advertised set announced "Callas is Carmen", as though that settled the matter. It was a good sales proposition for "the tigress", as they liked to call her, appealed to the imagination readily enough as the *femme fatale* of Bizet's opera which, after a poor start, became world-famous partly as a vehicle for temperamental prima donnas. Callas's recording of a part she never sang on stage is valuable because it preserves and exceeds the stereotype (EMI CDS 5 56281-2).

Conducted by Sir Thomas Beecham, it is enjoyed and respected for a refinement and spirit felt to be essentially Gallic (EMI CDS 5 56214-2). Since then, the opera itself has been reassessed and the score re-edited. Two recordings which responded intelligently and put all the skills of studio production to good effect. These are the ones most eligible for the library that is looking for a single representation. The first is under Claudio Abbado (DG 419 483-2) and has Teresa Berganza and Plácido Domingo in the leading roles; the other (Decca 414 459-2, £46.49) also has Domingo and is conducted by

Sir Georg Solti with Tatiana Troyanos as Carmen. In favour of the first is its very clear definition of sound; against it is the more imaginative production, lively and atmospheric. Domingo is excellent in both, but Troyanos gives him more to feed on than does Berganza. Kiri Te Kanawa is a most lovely Micaële and José van Dam a fine Torreador, both of them slightly superior to their counterparts with Abbado. Solti is at his best, the habitual energy and control warmed by a fresh, fully engaged study of the score. Orchestral playing (London Philharmonic) and choral work (the John Alldis Choir) are first-rate.

● To order the recommended recording, with free delivery, please send a cheque payable to The Times Music Shop to FREEPOST, 3 COBBI, Forres, IV36 0BR or phone 0345 023 468; e-mail: music@the-times.co.uk
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Flirting with the limelight

Darcey Bussell's fans were out in force at the Festival Hall on Friday night. They had been waiting a long time for a sighting of their favourite ballerina...



Sweeping all others before her: after six months away, Darcey Bussell thrills her fans

DEBRA CRAINE

POP: Born-again band kicks off a British tour; plus his friends pay tribute to Epic Soundtracks

As resurrections go, the Verve's has been one of the most successful. Like Lazarus-like proportions, two or three ago they were a mid-scale indie band...

good time there, leaving in his past lives. He realized they couldn't get any higher. Songs like Sonnet and The Draper Don't Work back to the romanticism of Aztec Camera's Roddy Frame or Echo and the Bunnymen at their peak...

Lads find a harder edge

Barrowland's deep glow, the gorgeously deep sounds emanating from his larynx at odds with his cool-lounger frame. But the rest of the band are just as committed. The lead guitarist Nick McCabe, is something of a star, his work on Bittersweet Symphony, buried in strings on record, at last allowed to shine...

Respects paid

The last time the Swell Maps played live was somewhere in Italy in 1980. Back then, they were an experimental punk band, whose sound was to become a primary influence on the nascent Sonic Youth. On Saturday the Swell Maps reformed, not as an exercise in nostalgia but in tribute to Epic Soundtracks, the band's co-founder and drummer, who died last November aged 38...

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LAW

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Robin Fitzsimons talks to the former colony's new Chief Justice



The Special Administrative Region: many people in the former Crown Colony look to its legal system, inherited from Britain, to guarantee rights

Hong Kong's Mr Justice

When the Union Flag came down in Hong Kong, the institutional links with the United Kingdom seemed severed forever. Yet Hong Kong's independent judiciary is one British creation that can still defend its 'rule of law' against 'rule from the north'.

home for a Chief Justice who is 'determined that this court will enjoy an international reputation'. Justice Li is adamant that 'an independent judiciary belongs to the community', and that the CFA has 'a pivotal role' in defending 'the high degree of autonomy' promised to the region.

Western and Confucian values are irreconcilably polarised. 'The Basic Law,' he says, 'lays down the common law tradition, in which I grew up and practised. The common law protects and enshrines values such as the liberty of the subject. This is not a matter for debate.'

of which he is now an honorary Bench. But he is no Bar traditionalist. Two years ago he ran an unsuccessful signature campaign to get rid of wigs in court. 'Outdated, old-fashioned - distance the judiciary from the community' - but he was outnumbered: only in the Court of Final Appeal have judicial wigs been discarded.

ation as a black-letter lawyer turned radical constitutional activist. Lord Cooke is a Privy Counsellor, known for defending human rights, who was President of New Zealand's Court of Appeal. Justice Li emphasises that judgments of the whole court 'of five, not one' will make its reputation.



Justice Li Hong Kong hope

New aide for Wolsey?

LORD IRVINE of Lairg, the Lord Chancellor, wants to appoint a £70,000-a-year Director of Communications over and above his efficient press office headed by the experienced and popular Sheila Thompson.

Party pooper

A NEW menace is hanging over the heads of householders who are contemplating holding parties during the winter months - the threat of litigation from angry guests injured at the host's home.

An OU success

THE Open University's first law degree course has attracted more than 900 students, making it Britain's largest single undergraduate degree course in law.

The OU course, he adds, provides people with the chance to graduate without debt because they can work while studying.

Off to HK

TWO law lords, Lord Nicholls of Birkenhead and Lord Hoffmann, this week take up their appointments as judges at the Court of Final Appeal in Hong Kong. The

Party pooper

two judges, who will be called on as needed, will serve a crucial role, the Lord Chancellor said their appointment showed Britain's confidence in the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region.

Party pooper

active steps to recover damages. Access to justice gets easier all the time, particularly as a result of the introduction of 'no win, no fee' agreements with solicitors.

Keeping secrets that can be revealed

Mr Justice Toulson was right to lift the injunction on January 2 preventing identification of the Home Secretary, Jack Straw, as the Cabinet Minister whose 17-year-old son was accused of selling cannibals. Newspapers in Scotland, Ireland and France had identified Mr Straw, and the information was readily available on the Internet, so the judge correctly concluded that it would be absurd to continue to prevent publication by newspapers in England.



DAVID PANNICK QC

that an injunction to prevent publication of identifying details was appropriate because otherwise, if criminal proceedings did come to court, the purpose of Section 49 of the 1933 Act to maintain the boy's anonymity would be seriously impeded or prejudiced. On this far from easy issue, the judge was, I suggest, wrong in law.

The legal issues faced by Mr Justice Moses were more difficult when he granted the original injunction sought by the Attorney-General in the Straw case on December 30. Section 49 of the Children and Young Persons Act 1933 states that reports of proceedings in youth courts should not identify a young person involved. But, as Mr Justice Moses recognised, there were, at that time, no court proceedings in the Straw case.

Rights in the Sunday Times Case that English law had breached the right to freedom of expression by prohibiting publication of details of the Thalidomide case pending court proceedings.

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Cartoon titled 'QUEEN'S COUNSEL' by STEUART & FRANCIS. The cartoon depicts a conversation between a lawyer and a client. The client asks 'BUT SHOULD I ACCEPT THEIR OFFER, SIR GEORGE?', the lawyer replies 'I'M AFRAID THAT'S A DECISION FOR YOU, MR SPROCKETT'. The client asks 'LITIGATION IS A RISKY BUSINESS', the lawyer replies 'INDEED'. The client asks 'YOU CAN NEVER TELL WHAT A JUDGE WILL DO WITH A CASE LIKE THIS', the lawyer replies 'SOMETIMES YOU WIN, SOMETIMES YOU LOSE'. The client asks 'WHAT DO THE LAWYERS ADVISE, DEAR?', the lawyer replies 'ER... I'M NOT SURE'.

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Gary Slapper on the legal loophole that seems to offer inadequate protection to children

Tough law when a child is killed

When John Sherrington and Lavinia Adams were jailed last month for cruelty and neglect of Adams's 18-month-old daughter, Sarah, there was a public outcry. The outrage did not stem from a belief that the two were innocent. Rather, it came from a view that they should have been convicted of murder because of the multiple injuries to the baby - including a fractured skull and brain haemorrhage - that led to their being prosecuted caused her death.

A legal curiosity prevented Adams and Sherrington from being prosecuted for murder. Though Sarah was repeatedly injured while in the care of the two, the prosecution was unable to prove either that they had a "joint enterprise" (in which cases they could have been prosecuted for murder or manslaughter) or which of them in particular had inflicted the lethal blows.

There have been many other cases in which parents have escaped homicide charges for children's deaths because the prosecution has been unable to show which of the two people caused the death. The National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC) has campaigned to have this loophole closed but the law is governed by a Court of Appeal decision.

In 1984 Linda and James Lane were convicted at Cardiff Crown Court of the manslaughter of Sara Phillips Mrs Lane's 22-month-old child. The baby had been fatally injured between noon and 8.30pm. Extensive haemorrhages were found in both her eyes, and there was a severe bruise on the side of her face which bore the same pattern as that of a rush mat in the Lane's home. Each parent had been present for some of the relevant time and absent for some of it but throughout the period the child had always been in the presence of one of them. On appeal, it was held that there was no case of manslaughter to answer because, on the available facts, it was not possible to prove which defendant struck the child, nor that they were acting together to harm her.

The Court of Appeal relied on one of its own 1955 decisions. Lord Chief Justice Goddard had stated that if two people are jointly indicted for a crime but the evidence does not point to one rather than the other, and there is no evidence that they were acting in concert "the jury ought to return a verdict of Not Guilty in the case of both because the prosecution have not proved the case. If, in those circumstances, it is left to the defendants to get out of the difficulty if they can, that would put the onus on the defendants to prove themselves not guilty". Lord Goddard also said that though it was "unfortunate" that a guilty party could not be brought to justice, "it is far more important that there should not be a miscarriage of justice and that the law should be maintained rather than that there should be a failure in some particular case".

Has social and legal thinking changed since these decisions? In some ways it has. Since the Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994, it has been possible for juries to make adverse inferences from a defendant's silence at trial, so that a refusal to explain how a child came by its injuries could be taken as guilt. Thus, effectively, there is now precisely what Lord Goddard referred to as something that should not happen: "an onus on... defendants to prove themselves not guilty".

For some, there is nothing repugnant where a child has evidently been beaten to death by one of two brutal adults, in allowing an assumption that both were implicated (either by working in concert or by using silence to cover up for the other), and charging both with the homicide. There might, though, be difficulties in allowing adverse inferences to be drawn from the refusal of spouses to give evidence against each other. And it would put an innocent person in a terrible position. Where the real offender is the husband, the wife would have to choose between betraying the man and losing him (and possibly her home) through his imprisonment, or silence in which case, if



Adams did not face a charge of murder



Sherrington: jailed for cruelty and neglect after the death of an 18-month-old girl

it were equated with her guilt, she would risk having her children taken into care. There are also cases concerned with child abuse that raise legal problems. When, for example, two drunk people get out of a car that one of them has obviously been driving, and they flee to escape apprehension, it is possible that neither will be convicted of drink driving. The police would have to prove either that one person in particular was driving or that both knew, when they got into the vehicle, that the other was over the legal limit.

The NSPCC has previously suggested that during a trial the prosecution should be able to refer to evidence of previous convictions for violence, cruelty or neglect by one partner against the child victim whether or not the earlier instances were "strikingly similar" (the standard test) to the latest attack. It has also been suggested that separate trials for defendants might work better.

National research conducted for the

NSPCC has found that no one in the Crown Prosecution Service or the police or the legal professions could give any reasonable estimate about how many publicly desirable prosecutions for homicide or serious injury are passed over because domestic partners refuse to explain a child's injuries and, in effect, say: "You can't prove which one of us it was."

Infants are the social group most at risk of homicide and a child is more likely to be harmed by someone from their own family than by a stranger. Six or seven children are killed every year by strangers whereas more than 80 are killed by their parents, carers or someone known to the family. One thing that would be clearer, were parents to be prosecuted for offences of homicide in these circumstances, would be the registration on the public record of the true extent of this most vicious of crimes.

Dr Slapper is Director of the Law Programme at the Open University.

How Strasbourg can help business

Companies should watch European Court developments, says Jeffrey Thomas

To many, the European Convention on Human Rights concerns only civil liberties. A view even exists that the European Court of Human Rights judges who oversee the Convention are no more than "a collection of elderly European academics", unused to the mysteries of business, with the unfortunate habit of protecting Irish terrorists and of hearing cases with oddball names such as the "Open Door and Dublin Well Woman v Ireland". But any company taking such a dismissive attitude risks missing legal developments of huge importance. The Convention seeks to secure a wide range of rights and freedoms for everyone, whether corporate entities or individuals, within States that are party to it. These rights are expressed by means of broad statements of principle such as "Everyone has the right to liberty and security of person" and "Everyone has the right to freedom of expression", subject to specific limitations.

The Convention requires the court to interpret and apply these principles and exemptions to cases that come before it. These principles affect the business community, particularly in commercial property, the media, taxation and the protection of any corporate property from unjustified government interference.

In its early days almost no one went to the court. During his time at the court between 1958 and 1966, the great international lawyer, Sir Arnold McNair, did not give judgment in a single case. But lately the court's case load has greatly expanded. Since 1991, it has given 530 judgments. In those cases where there is a Convention angle, it is the ultimate court of appeal for most European jurisdictions.

The first group of cases of commercial interest concerns the media industry and freedom of speech. The landmark 1979 *Sunday Times* case concerned an article on thalidomide and the relationship between the English law of contempt of court and the Convention. In 1991 *The Sunday Times* was back at the court, with *The Observer* and *The Guardian*, in connection with the *Spycatcher* book.

Freedom of expression was also involved in certain cases of interest to the telecommunications industry involving the ability to transmit programmes beamed from other States.

Another important area is Article 1 of the Convention's Protocol 1, protecting the peaceful enjoyment of "possessions". One classic case based on this is the 1986 *Lithgow* case when the likes of *inter alia*, Vesper Thornycroft, Vickers, Yarrow and the Prudential complained in connection with the nationalisation of the aircraft and shipbuilding industries to create British Aerospace and British Shipbuilders. Though the court held the Convention had not been breached, when the Labour Party was considering how to bring the privatised industries back into the public domain, a challenge under Article 1 of Protocol 1 was a concern.

In taxation, the National & Provincial, Leeds Permanent and Yorkshire Building Societies recently argued a case before the court on the ground that retrospective tax legislation to close a loophole in the 1985 Finance Act was contrary to the Convention. About £80 million is at stake. Before the European Commission of Human Rights in 1996 the UK Government succeeded under Article 1 (P1), then lost over a claim that retrospective tax legislation when the relevant matter was before the English courts interfered with the right to a fair and public hearing of civil rights. The court's judgment is expected soon.

In future years, for two reasons, the court's impact on UK business life can only increase. First, the Government has announced that a Bill will be introduced to incorporate into law the Convention's main provisions. Secondly, the court, now a part-time institution, will from this coming autumn operate on a full-time basis so it can cope with its increasing case load.

Given these two developments, the business community, wherever it has a grievance for which English law provides no remedy, may well find it worth its while to pursue such a remedy under the Convention.

The author is director of legal support at Ashurst Morris Crisp, the City law firm.



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City Salaries
A sample of the increasing competition for staff in the re-structured by several leading City firms of the six-monthly pay increase. A November split has been implemented. This was common practice in the 1990s, but was absent in the recession.

In effect, salaries are not actually reviewed in November. The May review levels are maintained. But within these levels, salaries are being increased to meet the best head-hunt way. A six-month increase within the existing salary structure. There are specific instances, particularly in the case of size of firm, where this approach is inappropriate. Several medium-sized firms (and small firms) pay the same rates as the largest City firms.

Our survey of City salaries to be published shortly, shows the November increases into account.

Large City Firms (100+ partners)

Level of Qualification	Salary Range
Newly Qualified	£30,000-£31,000
1 Year	£34,000-£36,000
2 Years	£36,000-£41,000
3 Years	£40,000-£47,000
4 Years	£44,000-£54,000
5 Years	£50,000-£61,000
6 Years	£54,000-£70,000

Medium City Firms (20-90 partners)

Level of Qualification	Salary Range
Newly Qualified	£28,000-£30,000
1 Year	£31,000-£34,000
2 Years	£34,000-£37,000
3 Years	£37,000-£44,000
4 Years	£38,000-£50,000
5 Years	£40,000-£57,000
6 Years	£42,000-£61,000

Michael Chambers

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Corporate: Herts
Intel lecture to requires an lawyer with P10 exp for new role handling mainly corporate matters incl IT, Opp to get involved in tax/brexit matters at Group level.

M&A: South-East
International hi-tech company requires a commercial lawyer with 4-6 years' exp with M&A experience to work closely with its senior lawyer. An excellent opportunity to step out of London.

Construction: London/SE
We have various positions for construction lawyers in-house in London and the surrounding area. Vacancies exist in contentious and non-contentious roles; every level of experience considered.

PRIVATE PRACTICE LONDON: David Woolson, Simon Anderson
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Partnership Positions
We have been assisting partners seeking a career move for over 20 years now and are regularly placing several partners each month.

Employment Partner: City
Unique opportunity for an experienced employment lawyer with part following to join profitable 5 partner firm handling quality contentious employment work.

Private Client: Westminster
One of the top private client firms seeks 2-4 year qual solicitor for work with tax planning bias. Clients include both business executives and landed families.

Intellectual Property: Holborn
40 partner Holborn firm seeks 1-2 year qualified IP litigator to assist a partner on both hard and soft IP. This small team offers considerable client contact.

Corporate: City
Pre-eminent City firm offers 0-4 yr qual solicitor variety of work with one common thread, firm instructed on high proportion of City's headline deals. To £55,000.

Sole Lawyer: Saudi Arabia
Multi-disciplinary engineering and finance based company seeks to appoint an experienced corporate lawyer with a broad based commercial background to be based in Al Khobar.

Co/Com: Northern Home Counties
International company seeks top quality commercial/M&A lawyer 2-5 years' exp. The work will be international and involves handling your own projects within a flat structured department.

Media/Publishing: London
Publishing/broadcasting co seeks lawyer 1-3 years' exp to handle libel and ITC work, non-contentious media, commercial contract drafting and employment issues.

PI with Languages: WC2
Insurance litigation firm seeks 1-4 year qualified assistant with fluent French and German to handle quality personal injury work for overseas insurers.

Know-How: City
If well-paid and relatively unpressurised work appeals, then why not investigate our numerous know-how positions. Corporate and pensions in particular demand.

Construction: City
NQ-1 year qualified assistant with both contentious and non-contentious construction experience sought by successful group within this medium-sized City firm.

Banking: City
Unique international boutique banking and finance practice with blue chip clientele seeks 3-5 year qualified solicitor for broad cross-border and UK workload.

Company/Commercial/IT: Surrey
City salary, quality work, first-class firm and attractive location await NQ-6 year pqs solicitor. General co/comm, employment, trade marks and IP work for hi-tech clients.

Our client, a well established private company, is looking to appoint its first in-house lawyer.

The company, which is shortly moving to refurbished modern offices at Heathrow, is involved in a range of activities including property development and electronics and is currently preparing to diversify into air freight transportation. With net profits last year of approximately £700,000 and assets of £6M, the company is in a prime position to develop and build on its success over the past 8 years.

You will be joining a small team, working closely with management on a wide range of commercial and contractual matters and with the opportunity for some international travel, in particular to the

US. While experience of aviation and/or property law would be an advantage, the level of qualification and field of expertise are not as important as being able to demonstrate a flexible, energetic approach and first rate communication skills.

This is an unusual opportunity to join a dynamic and successful company at an exciting time and would suit a junior solicitor looking for something different or a senior lawyer seeking a new challenge at a later stage of his or her career.

An attractive remuneration package including profit share and company car will be offered to the right candidate with prospects for full Board membership.

For further details please contact Morwenna Lewis, Sonya Rayner or Aileen Shepherd or send them a copy of your CV.

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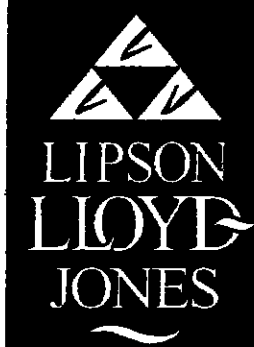
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مكتبة الامم

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The Scotch House

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RACING: KING GEORGE VICTORY BRINGS JOCKEY'S TALENTS TO WIDER AUDIENCE

Thornton rises above the crowd

By Chris McGrath

THE crowds went to Kempton on Boxing Day expecting, once again, to savour their legacy from the late Arthur Stephenson. The inscrutable genius of northern jump racing, Stephenson had trained One Man as a young horse, and now the grey sought his third King George VI Chase. While One Man disappointed, however, the race showed that another of Stephenson's bequests might yet prove the more enduring.

Success on See More Business gave Andrew Thornton the finest moment of his breakthrough season. As a young amateur, Thornton had absorbed the great man's laconic wisdom and now, at 25, is emerging as a jockey of whom W.A. would have been proud.

Thornton rode See More Business only because Timmy Murphy was suspended, but has legitimate Cheltenham Gold Cup hopes of his own with Cool Dawn. At Sandown last Saturday, moreover, he escorted French Holly into the Champion Hurdle picture.

"Our farm was ten minutes down the road from W.A., Thornton said at Plumpton yesterday. "I was introduced to him when I was 13, wearing clean breeches and jodhpurs. I didn't wear them the next day."

"Further refinement continued in pony club, hunter trials, team chasing — but above all in the yard."

"W.A. was my mentor from day one, taught me everything, right from brushing a horse over. Every single ride, whether I'd won or finished



Thornton with See More Business in the winner's enclosure at Kempton after the King George VI Chase

down the field, he would tell me what I'd done wrong. When he died, in 1992, it was a shock to be cut off from that."

If 47 winners this season represent something of a flood, it took attention to force the breach. Thornton is naturally

conspicuous, but at a price. An inch shy of six feet, he strives grimly to keep his weight under control; the same stoicism drives him 60,000 miles a year, so that his lofty figure is as evident at Kelso or Newton Abbot.

"When I first came south, it had to be done, because I didn't have many connections in Lambourn," he said. "I don't mind driving, but it's hard when you are wasting as well. I was 10st 10lb stripped on Boxing Day. That was my Christmas present, not riding to do a light weight. Riding winners makes it easier, but it makes no difference. It has got to be done, you just have to be dedicated."

His long legs are pulled remorselessly by rivals who perch nearly around him approaching a fence. "Style isn't everything, it's results that matter," he says. He is also teased about his sight — but his wears contact lenses — but his fellow jockeys know that their caricature of clumsiness can only be affectionate.

That he is the most modest and charming of men became obvious when he was interviewed returning to the winner's enclosure on See More Business. The first thing he said was that Murphy should be consoled by having a class horse to ride on his return.

RICHARD EVANS

Next: Diamond Drill (3.00 Lingfield Park)
Diamond Drill spread-eagled the opposition when winning by eight lengths at Lingfield last month and Peter Makin's lightly raced colt looks capable of following up over this longer trip.

He may yet scupper Murphy anew at Cheltenham, however. "Cool Dawn has come through the ranks and is unexposed," he said. "I think he has only had ten runs under Rules. His great asset is his quick, enthusiastic jumping, and he would stay the Gold Cup trip well."

Cool Dawn, who goes on trial at Ascot on Friday week, was certainly one of the more intriguing of 39 Gold Cup entries published yesterday. Stephenson stayed at Hexham the day The Thinker won the Gold Cup, but you can bet he will be looking down avidly this time.

LINGFIELD PARK

THUNDERER
1.00 Fancy Design
1.30 English Invader
2.00 Lady Laproaig
Timekeeper's top rating: 1.00 JUBILEE SCHOLAR.

GUIDE TO OUR RACECARD

123 123 04002 GOOD TIMES 74 (C.D.F.F. 6.5) 50x D. P. 8-10-12 4 W. West 41 88
Recent number Draw in brackets. Single-figure in brackets in last race. Group of which horse has won if — last good to last hard — good — not good to last hard; (over) in brackets. Time, Age and weight. Note plus any allowance. Timekeeper's sound rating.

CORNS: STANDARD TOTE JACKPOT MEETING
1.00 55-1M. LOW NUMBERS BEST

1.00 NEWPORT APPRENTICE HANDICAP (2,232-1m 21) 15 runners
123 123 00001-1 GRAMMUS CHASE 3 (C.D.F.F. 6.5) 50x D. P. 8-10-12 4 W. West 41 88
123 123 00002-2 BENT ARCH 10 (C.D.F.F. 6.5) 50x D. P. 8-10-12 4 W. West 41 88
123 123 00003-3 JUBILEE SCHOLAR 25 (C.D.F.F. 6.5) 50x D. P. 8-10-12 4 W. West 41 88
123 123 00004-4 QUEEN STROLLER 7 (C.D.F.F. 6.5) 50x D. P. 8-10-12 4 W. West 41 88
123 123 00005-5 FANCY DESIGN 74 (C.D.F.F. 6.5) 50x D. P. 8-10-12 4 W. West 41 88

1.30 YARMOUTH CLAIMING STAKES (2,273-1m 5) 15 runners
123 123 00001-1 ELABO VESPER 21 (C.D.F.F. 6.5) 50x D. P. 8-10-12 4 W. West 41 88
123 123 00002-2 NIGHT CITY 10 (C.D.F.F. 6.5) 50x D. P. 8-10-12 4 W. West 41 88
123 123 00003-3 RETURN OF THE MAG 10 (C.D.F.F. 6.5) 50x D. P. 8-10-12 4 W. West 41 88
123 123 00004-4 TIME CAR TELL 3 (C.D.F.F. 6.5) 50x D. P. 8-10-12 4 W. West 41 88
123 123 00005-5 ENGLISH INVADER 7 (C.D.F.F. 6.5) 50x D. P. 8-10-12 4 W. West 41 88

2.00 VENTHUR SELLING STAKES (3-Y-O: £1,829 7) 8 runners
123 123 00001-1 FERRAN 36 (C.D.F.F. 6.5) 50x D. P. 8-10-12 4 W. West 41 88
123 123 00002-2 FERRAN 36 (C.D.F.F. 6.5) 50x D. P. 8-10-12 4 W. West 41 88
123 123 00003-3 FERRAN 36 (C.D.F.F. 6.5) 50x D. P. 8-10-12 4 W. West 41 88
123 123 00004-4 FERRAN 36 (C.D.F.F. 6.5) 50x D. P. 8-10-12 4 W. West 41 88
123 123 00005-5 FERRAN 36 (C.D.F.F. 6.5) 50x D. P. 8-10-12 4 W. West 41 88

2.30 RYDE HANDICAP (2,273-5f) 50 runners
123 123 00001-1 BLUE SHADOW 12 (C.D.F.F. 6.5) 50x D. P. 8-10-12 4 W. West 41 88
123 123 00002-2 BLUE SHADOW 12 (C.D.F.F. 6.5) 50x D. P. 8-10-12 4 W. West 41 88
123 123 00003-3 BLUE SHADOW 12 (C.D.F.F. 6.5) 50x D. P. 8-10-12 4 W. West 41 88
123 123 00004-4 BLUE SHADOW 12 (C.D.F.F. 6.5) 50x D. P. 8-10-12 4 W. West 41 88
123 123 00005-5 BLUE SHADOW 12 (C.D.F.F. 6.5) 50x D. P. 8-10-12 4 W. West 41 88

3.00 SHANKLIN HANDICAP (3-Y-O: £3,355; 1m) 5 runners
123 123 00001-1 BLUE SHADOW 12 (C.D.F.F. 6.5) 50x D. P. 8-10-12 4 W. West 41 88
123 123 00002-2 BLUE SHADOW 12 (C.D.F.F. 6.5) 50x D. P. 8-10-12 4 W. West 41 88
123 123 00003-3 BLUE SHADOW 12 (C.D.F.F. 6.5) 50x D. P. 8-10-12 4 W. West 41 88
123 123 00004-4 BLUE SHADOW 12 (C.D.F.F. 6.5) 50x D. P. 8-10-12 4 W. West 41 88
123 123 00005-5 BLUE SHADOW 12 (C.D.F.F. 6.5) 50x D. P. 8-10-12 4 W. West 41 88

3.30 COWES MAIDEN STAKES (2,388; 6f) 4 runners
123 123 00001-1 BLUE SHADOW 12 (C.D.F.F. 6.5) 50x D. P. 8-10-12 4 W. West 41 88
123 123 00002-2 BLUE SHADOW 12 (C.D.F.F. 6.5) 50x D. P. 8-10-12 4 W. West 41 88
123 123 00003-3 BLUE SHADOW 12 (C.D.F.F. 6.5) 50x D. P. 8-10-12 4 W. West 41 88
123 123 00004-4 BLUE SHADOW 12 (C.D.F.F. 6.5) 50x D. P. 8-10-12 4 W. West 41 88
123 123 00005-5 BLUE SHADOW 12 (C.D.F.F. 6.5) 50x D. P. 8-10-12 4 W. West 41 88

4.00 SOUTHWELL
123 123 00001-1 BLUE SHADOW 12 (C.D.F.F. 6.5) 50x D. P. 8-10-12 4 W. West 41 88
123 123 00002-2 BLUE SHADOW 12 (C.D.F.F. 6.5) 50x D. P. 8-10-12 4 W. West 41 88
123 123 00003-3 BLUE SHADOW 12 (C.D.F.F. 6.5) 50x D. P. 8-10-12 4 W. West 41 88
123 123 00004-4 BLUE SHADOW 12 (C.D.F.F. 6.5) 50x D. P. 8-10-12 4 W. West 41 88
123 123 00005-5 BLUE SHADOW 12 (C.D.F.F. 6.5) 50x D. P. 8-10-12 4 W. West 41 88

4.30 PLUMPTON
123 123 00001-1 BLUE SHADOW 12 (C.D.F.F. 6.5) 50x D. P. 8-10-12 4 W. West 41 88
123 123 00002-2 BLUE SHADOW 12 (C.D.F.F. 6.5) 50x D. P. 8-10-12 4 W. West 41 88
123 123 00003-3 BLUE SHADOW 12 (C.D.F.F. 6.5) 50x D. P. 8-10-12 4 W. West 41 88
123 123 00004-4 BLUE SHADOW 12 (C.D.F.F. 6.5) 50x D. P. 8-10-12 4 W. West 41 88
123 123 00005-5 BLUE SHADOW 12 (C.D.F.F. 6.5) 50x D. P. 8-10-12 4 W. West 41 88

5.00 YESTERDAY'S RESULTS
123 123 00001-1 BLUE SHADOW 12 (C.D.F.F. 6.5) 50x D. P. 8-10-12 4 W. West 41 88
123 123 00002-2 BLUE SHADOW 12 (C.D.F.F. 6.5) 50x D. P. 8-10-12 4 W. West 41 88
123 123 00003-3 BLUE SHADOW 12 (C.D.F.F. 6.5) 50x D. P. 8-10-12 4 W. West 41 88
123 123 00004-4 BLUE SHADOW 12 (C.D.F.F. 6.5) 50x D. P. 8-10-12 4 W. West 41 88
123 123 00005-5 BLUE SHADOW 12 (C.D.F.F. 6.5) 50x D. P. 8-10-12 4 W. West 41 88

5.30 WINNING MOVE
123 123 00001-1 BLUE SHADOW 12 (C.D.F.F. 6.5) 50x D. P. 8-10-12 4 W. West 41 88
123 123 00002-2 BLUE SHADOW 12 (C.D.F.F. 6.5) 50x D. P. 8-10-12 4 W. West 41 88
123 123 00003-3 BLUE SHADOW 12 (C.D.F.F. 6.5) 50x D. P. 8-10-12 4 W. West 41 88
123 123 00004-4 BLUE SHADOW 12 (C.D.F.F. 6.5) 50x D. P. 8-10-12 4 W. West 41 88
123 123 00005-5 BLUE SHADOW 12 (C.D.F.F. 6.5) 50x D. P. 8-10-12 4 W. West 41 88

6.00 WORD WATCHING
123 123 00001-1 BLUE SHADOW 12 (C.D.F.F. 6.5) 50x D. P. 8-10-12 4 W. West 41 88
123 123 00002-2 BLUE SHADOW 12 (C.D.F.F. 6.5) 50x D. P. 8-10-12 4 W. West 41 88
123 123 00003-3 BLUE SHADOW 12 (C.D.F.F. 6.5) 50x D. P. 8-10-12 4 W. West 41 88
123 123 00004-4 BLUE SHADOW 12 (C.D.F.F. 6.5) 50x D. P. 8-10-12 4 W. West 41 88
123 123 00005-5 BLUE SHADOW 12 (C.D.F.F. 6.5) 50x D. P. 8-10-12 4 W. West 41 88

6.30 COURSE SPECIALISTS
123 123 00001-1 BLUE SHADOW 12 (C.D.F.F. 6.5) 50x D. P. 8-10-12 4 W. West 41 88
123 123 00002-2 BLUE SHADOW 12 (C.D.F.F. 6.5) 50x D. P. 8-10-12 4 W. West 41 88
123 123 00003-3 BLUE SHADOW 12 (C.D.F.F. 6.5) 50x D. P. 8-10-12 4 W. West 41 88
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123 123 00005-5 BLUE SHADOW 12 (C.D.F.F. 6.5) 50x D. P. 8-10-12 4 W. West 41 88

7.00 JOCKEYS
123 123 00001-1 BLUE SHADOW 12 (C.D.F.F. 6.5) 50x D. P. 8-10-12 4 W. West 41 88
123 123 00002-2 BLUE SHADOW 12 (C.D.F.F. 6.5) 50x D. P. 8-10-12 4 W. West 41 88
123 123 00003-3 BLUE SHADOW 12 (C.D.F.F. 6.5) 50x D. P. 8-10-12 4 W. West 41 88
123 123 00004-4 BLUE SHADOW 12 (C.D.F.F. 6.5) 50x D. P. 8-10-12 4 W. West 41 88
123 123 00005-5 BLUE SHADOW 12 (C.D.F.F. 6.5) 50x D. P. 8-10-12 4 W. West 41 88

7.30 WOOD WATCHING
123 123 00001-1 BLUE SHADOW 12 (C.D.F.F. 6.5) 50x D. P. 8-10-12 4 W. West 41 88
123 123 00002-2 BLUE SHADOW 12 (C.D.F.F. 6.5) 50x D. P. 8-10-12 4 W. West 41 88
123 123 00003-3 BLUE SHADOW 12 (C.D.F.F. 6.5) 50x D. P. 8-10-12 4 W. West 41 88
123 123 00004-4 BLUE SHADOW 12 (C.D.F.F. 6.5) 50x D. P. 8-10-12 4 W. West 41 88
123 123 00005-5 BLUE SHADOW 12 (C.D.F.F. 6.5) 50x D. P. 8-10-12 4 W. West 41 88

8.00 YESTERDAY'S RESULTS
123 123 00001-1 BLUE SHADOW 12 (C.D.F.F. 6.5) 50x D. P. 8-10-12 4 W. West 41 88
123 123 00002-2 BLUE SHADOW 12 (C.D.F.F. 6.5) 50x D. P. 8-10-12 4 W. West 41 88
123 123 00003-3 BLUE SHADOW 12 (C.D.F.F. 6.5) 50x D. P. 8-10-12 4 W. West 41 88
123 123 00004-4 BLUE SHADOW 12 (C.D.F.F. 6.5) 50x D. P. 8-10-12 4 W. West 41 88
123 123 00005-5 BLUE SHADOW 12 (C.D.F.F. 6.5) 50x D. P. 8-10-12 4 W. West 41 88

8.30 WINNING MOVE
123 123 00001-1 BLUE SHADOW 12 (C.D.F.F. 6.5) 50x D. P. 8-10-12 4 W. West 41 88
123 123 00002-2 BLUE SHADOW 12 (C.D.F.F. 6.5) 50x D. P. 8-10-12 4 W. West 41 88
123 123 00003-3 BLUE SHADOW 12 (C.D.F.F. 6.5) 50x D. P. 8-10-12 4 W. West 41 88
123 123 00004-4 BLUE SHADOW 12 (C.D.F.F. 6.5) 50x D. P. 8-10-12 4 W. West 41 88
123 123 00005-5 BLUE SHADOW 12 (C.D.F.F. 6.5) 50x D. P. 8-10-12 4 W. West 41 88

9.00 WORD WATCHING
123 123 00001-1 BLUE SHADOW 12 (C.D.F.F. 6.5) 50x D. P. 8-10-12 4 W. West 41 88
123 123 00002-2 BLUE SHADOW 12 (C.D.F.F. 6.5) 50x D. P. 8-10-12 4 W. West 41 88
123 123 00003-3 BLUE SHADOW 12 (C.D.F.F. 6.5) 50x D. P. 8-10-12 4 W. West 41 88
123 123 00004-4 BLUE SHADOW 12 (C.D.F.F. 6.5) 50x D. P. 8-10-12 4 W. West 41 88
123 123 00005-5 BLUE SHADOW 12 (C.D.F.F. 6.5) 50x D. P. 8-10-12 4 W. West 41 88

9.30 COURSE SPECIALISTS
123 123 00001-1 BLUE SHADOW 12 (C.D.F.F. 6.5) 50x D. P. 8-10-12 4 W. West 41 88
123 123 00002-2 BLUE SHADOW 12 (C.D.F.F. 6.5) 50x D. P. 8-10-12 4 W. West 41 88
123 123 00003-3 BLUE SHADOW 12 (C.D.F.F. 6.5) 50x D. P. 8-10-12 4 W. West 41 88
123 123 00004-4 BLUE SHADOW 12 (C.D.F.F. 6.5) 50x D. P. 8-10-12 4 W. West 41 88
123 123 00005-5 BLUE SHADOW 12 (C.D.F.F. 6.5) 50x D. P. 8-10-12 4 W. West 41 88

10.00 JOCKEYS
123 123 00001-1 BLUE SHADOW 12 (C.D.F.F. 6.5) 50x D. P. 8-10-12 4 W. West 41 88
123 123 00002-2 BLUE SHADOW 12 (C.D.F.F. 6.5) 50x D. P. 8-10-12 4 W. West 41 88
123 123 00003-3 BLUE SHADOW 12 (C.D.F.F. 6.5) 50x D. P. 8-10-12 4 W. West 41 88
123 123 00004-4 BLUE SHADOW 12 (C.D.F.F. 6.5) 50x D. P. 8-10-12 4 W. West 41 88
123 123 00005-5 BLUE SHADOW 12 (C.D.F.F. 6.5) 50x D. P. 8-10-12 4 W. West 41 88

10.30 WOOD WATCHING
123 123 00001-1 BLUE SHADOW 12 (C.D.F.F. 6.5) 50x D. P. 8-10-12 4 W. West 41 88
123 123 00002-2 BLUE SHADOW 12 (C.D.F.F. 6.5) 50x D. P. 8-10-12 4 W. West 41 88
123 123 00003-3 BLUE SHADOW 12 (C.D.F.F. 6.5) 50x D. P. 8-10-12 4 W. West 41 88
123 123 00004-4 BLUE SHADOW 12 (C.D.F.F. 6.5) 50x D. P. 8-10-12 4 W. West 41 88
123 123 00005-5 BLUE SHADOW 12 (C.D.F.F. 6.5) 50x D. P. 8-10-12 4 W. West 41 88

11.00 YESTERDAY'S RESULTS
123 123 00001-1 BLUE SHADOW 12 (C.D.F.F. 6.5) 50x D. P. 8-10-12 4 W. West 41 88
123 123 00002-2 BLUE SHADOW 12 (C.D.F.F. 6.5) 50x D. P. 8-10-12 4 W. West 41 88
123 123 00003-3 BLUE SHADOW 12 (C.D.F.F. 6.5) 50x D. P. 8-10-12 4 W. West 41 88
123 123 00004-4 BLUE SHADOW 12 (C.D.F.F. 6.5) 50x D. P. 8-10-12 4 W. West 41 88
123 123 00005-5 BLUE SHADOW 12 (C.D.F.F. 6.5) 50x D. P. 8-10-12 4 W. West 41 88

11.30 WINNING MOVE
123 123 00001-1 BLUE SHADOW 12 (C.D.F.F. 6.5) 50x D. P. 8-10-12 4 W. West 41 88
123 123 00002-2 BLUE SHADOW 12 (C.D.F.F. 6.5) 50x D. P. 8-10-12 4 W. West 41 88
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123 123 00005-5 BLUE SHADOW 12 (C.D.F.F. 6.5) 50x D. P. 8-10-12 4 W. West 41 88

12.00 WORD WATCHING
123 123 00001-1 BLUE SHADOW 12 (C.D.F.F. 6.5) 50x D. P. 8-10-12 4 W. West 41 88
123 123 00002-2 BLUE SHADOW 12 (C.D.F.F. 6.5) 50x D. P. 8-10-12 4 W. West 41 88
123 123 00003-3 BLUE SHADOW 12 (C.D.F.F. 6.5) 50x D. P. 8-10-12 4 W. West 41 88
123 123 00004-4 BLUE SHADOW 12 (C.D.F.F. 6.5) 50x D. P. 8-10-12 4 W. West 41 88
123 123 00005-5 BLUE SHADOW 12 (C.D.F.F. 6.5) 50x D. P. 8-10-12 4 W. West 41 88

12.30 COURSE SPECIALISTS
123 123 00001-1 BLUE SHADOW 12 (C.D.F.F. 6.5) 50x D. P. 8-10-12 4 W. West 41 88
123 123 00002-2 BLUE SHADOW 12 (C.D.F.F. 6.5) 50x D. P. 8-10-12 4 W. West 41 88
123 123 00003-3 BLUE SHADOW 12 (C.D.F.F. 6.5) 50x D. P. 8-10-12 4 W. West 41 88
123 123 00004-4 BLUE SHADOW 12 (C.D.F.F. 6.5) 50x D. P. 8-10-12 4 W. West 41 88
123 123 00005-5 BLUE SHADOW 12 (C.D.F.F. 6.5) 50x D. P. 8-10-12 4 W. West 41 88

13.00 JOCKEYS
123 123 00001-1 BLUE SHADOW 12 (C.D.F.F. 6.5) 50x D. P. 8-10-12 4 W. West 41 88
123 123 00002-2 BLUE SHADOW 12 (C.D.F.F. 6.5) 50x D. P. 8-10-12 4 W. West 41 88
123 123 00003-3 BLUE SHADOW 12 (C.D.F.F. 6.5) 50x D. P. 8-10-12 4 W. West 41 88
123 123 00004-4 BLUE SHADOW 12 (C.D.F.F. 6.5) 50x D. P. 8-10-12 4 W. West 41 88
123 123 00005-5 BLUE SHADOW 12 (C.D.F.F. 6.5) 50x D. P. 8-10-12 4 W. West 41 88

13.30 WOOD WATCHING
123 123 00001-1 BLUE SHADOW 12 (C.D.F.F. 6.5) 50x D. P. 8-10-12 4 W. West 41 88
123 123 00002-2 BLUE SHADOW 12 (C.D.F.F. 6.5) 50x D. P. 8-10-12 4 W. West 41 88
123 123 00003-3 BLUE SHADOW 12 (C.D.F.F. 6.5) 50x D. P. 8-10-12 4 W. West 41 88
123 123 00004-4 BLUE SHADOW 12 (C.D.F.F. 6.5) 50x D. P. 8-10-12 4 W. West 41 88
123 123 00005-5 BLUE SHADOW 12 (C.D.F.F. 6.5) 50x D. P. 8-10-12 4 W. West 41 88

14.00 YESTERDAY'S RESULTS
123 123 00001-1 BLUE SHADOW 12 (C.D.F.F. 6.5) 50x D. P. 8-10-12 4 W. West 41 88
123 123 00002-2 BLUE SHADOW 12 (C.D.F.F. 6.5) 50x D. P. 8-10-12 4 W. West 41 88
123 123 00003-3 BLUE SHADOW 12 (C.D.F.F. 6.5) 50x D. P. 8-10-12 4 W. West 41 88
123 123 00004-4 BLUE SHADOW 12 (C.D.F.F. 6.5) 50x D. P. 8-10-12 4 W. West 41 88
123 123 00005-5 BLUE SHADOW 12 (C.D.F.F. 6.5) 50x D. P. 8-10-12 4 W. West 41 88

14.30 WINNING MOVE
123 123 00001-1 BLUE SHADOW 12 (C.D.F.F. 6.5) 50x D. P. 8-10-12 4 W. West 41 88
123 123 00002-2 BLUE SHADOW 12 (C.D.F.F. 6.5) 50x D. P. 8-10-12 4 W. West 41 88
123 123 00003-3 BLUE SHADOW 12 (C.D.F.F. 6.5) 50x D. P. 8-10-12 4 W. West 41 88
123 123 00004-4 BLUE SHADOW 12 (C.D.F.F. 6.5) 50x D. P. 8-10-12 4 W. West 41 88
123 123 00005-5 BLUE SHADOW 12 (C.D.F.F. 6.5) 50x D. P. 8-10-12 4 W. West 41 88

15.00 WORD WATCHING
123 123 00001-1 BLUE SHADOW 12 (C.D.F.F. 6.5) 50x D. P. 8-10-12 4 W. West 41 88
123 123 00002-2 BLUE SHADOW 12 (C.D.F.F. 6.5) 50x D. P. 8-10-12 4 W. West 41 88
123 123 00003-3 BLUE SHADOW 12 (C.D.F.F. 6.5) 50x D. P. 8-10-12 4 W. West 41 88
123 123 00004-4 BLUE SHADOW 12 (C.D.F.F. 6.5) 50x D. P. 8-10-12 4 W. West 41 88
123 123 00005-5 BLUE SHADOW 12 (C.D.F.F. 6.5) 50x D. P. 8-10-12 4 W. West 41 88

15.30 COURSE SPECIALISTS
123 123 00001-1 BLUE SHADOW 1

FOOTBALL

Cheltenham bid to upset the odds

By RUSSELL KEMPSON



STEVENAGE Borough have dominated the FA Cup headlines since their 2-1 victory against Swindon Town ten days ago and subsequent fourth-round draw against Northampton United...

Hereford seek that Cup magic of 1972

By DAVID POWELL

JOHN ALDRIDGE and Steve McMahon played together for Liverpool in two FA Cup Finals in the Eighties, but the former will be anxious tonight not to share the latter's experience in the competition this season...

games. The momentum gathered by finishing runners-up in the Dr Martens League premier division last season has continued. "I suppose we've only got an outside chance, but we'll give it our best shot," Keith Knight, the Cheltenham and former Reading winger, said yesterday...

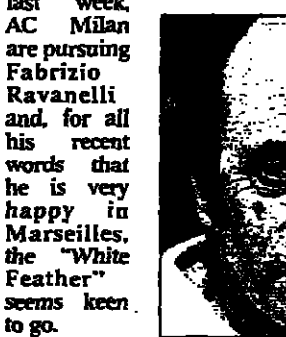


Ronaldo's stature in the world game was confirmed by the votes of the Fifa coaches in the player-of-the-year poll

Ronaldo remains a world apart

As expected, Ronaldo was voted world player of the year yesterday, for the second time in succession, by a consortium of 121 coaches under the stewardship of Fifa, the world governing body. He won by a landslide with 480 points...

BRIAN GLANVILLE



Overseas View

Juveventus, four points behind Inter, then has made somewhat heavy weather of defeating Vicenza in Turin. Alessandro del Piero scored a first-half penalty and Ciro Ferrara, the Italy defender, eventually contributed a second. In France, Manchester United must be delighted to see the continuing decline of their European Cup opponents, AS Monaco...

Shearer to play in practice match this week

By DAVID MADDOCK AND RICHARD HOBSON

ALAN SHEARER, the Newcastle United and England forward, will play in a private practice match this week as the latest step on his way to recovery from a serious ankle injury. Kenny Dalglish, the Newcastle manager, is attempting to arrange the match after Shearer's successful participation in training sessions for the past two weeks...

Advertisement for The Times newspaper featuring the headline 'It's true. Food does taste better out of a newspaper.' and a picture of a newspaper on a table.

FOR THE RECORD

Table with sports results for American Football, Basketball, Cricket, Golf, Ice Hockey, Luge, Snooker, Squash, Tennis, and Football.

POOLS FORECAST

Table with pool forecasts for various leagues including FA Cup, Nationwide League, and others.

SNOW REPORTS

Table with snow reports for various regions including Austria, France, Italy, and Switzerland.

Vertical advertisement on the right edge of the page, partially cut off, mentioning 'THE TIMES' and 'TENNIS'.

TENNIS: BRITISH NO 2 SLIPS OUT OF CONTENTION FOR PLACE AMONG 16 SEEDS IN AUSTRALIAN OPEN

Rivals pull rank on Henman in Melbourne

FROM JULIAN MUSCAT, TENNIS CORRESPONDENT IN SYDNEY

THE ramifications of Tim Henman's quarter-final defeat in Qatar became evident yesterday when the Briton's world ranking slipped two places to No 19. He is now unlikely to be seeded for the Australian Open, the first grand-slam event of 1998, which starts in Melbourne on Monday.

RANKINGS

- 1. P Sampras (US) 4,547pts; 2. P Rafter (Aus) 3,210; 3. M Chang (US) 3,189; 4. J Spilner (GB) 2,890; 5. G Rusedski (GB) 2,890; 7. P Korda (CZ) 2,486; 8. C Moye (Sp) 2,276; 9. T Muster (Austria) 2,255; 10. M Rios (Chile) 2,216; 11. R Kuylenstierna (Swe) 2,208; 12. S Bruguera (Sp) 2,200; 13. A Corretja (Sp) 2,275; 14. G Kuerten (Bel) 2,215; 15. G Verbeke (Bel) 2,211; 16. F. Pennetta (Sp) 2,110; 17. M Philippoussis (Aus) 1,802; 18. A Costa (Sp) 1,714; 19. Henman (GB) 1,622; 20. C Piacino (Fr) 1,534.

OTHER BRITISH: 145. A Richardson 312; 166. C Wilkinson 266; 190. M Fitchey 226; 210. D Sapsford 207; 281. L Lee 144; 318. G Coover 114; 353. L Milligan 85; 357. M Macdonald 85; 384. J Delgado 90; 423. A Parmer 70.

Henman's defeat by Petr Korda, seeded No 3 in Qatar, was certainly no disgrace. He was the only player to take a set off the eventual winner all week. However, Henman, a finalist in the corresponding event 12 months earlier, forfeited rankings points for failing to match those achievements. "If I was a betting man," he reflected, "I'd have to say that I won't be seeded [in Melbourne], but I know I'm capable of beating anyone on my day. We'll just have to see what the draw throws up." In that respect, he will learn his fate on Friday.

The absence from Melbourne of Yevgeny Kafelnikov (injured) and Richard Krajicek (personal reasons) means that both Philippoussis and Costa

are guaranteed a place among the 16 seeded players at Henman's expense. There is a touch of irony, therefore, in the Briton's seeding ahead of Costa in the Adidas International event in Sydney this week. Indeed, Henman, seeded No 6, won this very event 12 months ago, posting his maiden tournament victory on the ATP Tour in the process.

With Greg Rusedski - who, at No 6, is certain to be seeded for the Open - forsaking tournament play in favour of an exhibition event in Melbourne this week, Henman has the competitive stage to himself. Here is the chance for him to demonstrate the benefits of a close-season fitness programme aimed at increasing his overall strength. He now tips the scales five kilograms heavier; the emphasis in his physical training programme has recently shifted to speed work. If all players like to emphasise that such tournaments serve as valuable preparation for the grand slams, the fact is that winning does none of them any harm.

There is a danger that Henman will remain the near-purist: the one about whom purists drool but who fails to break through. Nearly 12 months have elapsed since his best sequence of results - a long time in contemporary tennis. While Henman marginally advanced his world status in 1997, others, such as Pat Rafter, Jonas Bjorkman and Rusedski, made far greater strides.

This detail was further emphasised in Australia last week, when Lleyton Hewitt, a 16-year-old scotchboy from Adelaide, dismissed his mentor, Mark Woodforde, and his hero, Andre Agassi, en route to winning an ATP Tour event in his home town. His ranking rocketed 350 places to No 200 in the world. Only Michael Chang, the world No 3, displayed a greater precocity on the main Tour when, three months younger than Hewitt, he triumphed in San Francisco ten years ago.

Hewitt, whose only previous big tournament experience was in the Australian Open last year, when he lost in the first round, multiplied his



Hewitt, 16, and already a tournament winner, represents the challenge of youth at the Sydney International

career earnings ten-fold in Adelaide. He has a wild card entry in Sydney and takes on Bjorkman, the No 2 seed, this morning. The new season is but one week old and youth has already reared its thrusting head. Meanwhile Woodforde, fresh from the wounds inflicted by Hewitt, faces Henman in the opening round here today. This would be an appropriate time for the Briton to make his mark, although

the draw pits him in the tougher of two sections. Henman faces a projected quarter-final encounter with a resurgent Thomas Enqvist, conqueror of Carlos Moyá, the No 3 seed, when the tournament goes under way yesterday, and then a semi-final against Rafter. The latter must initially overcome his compatriot, Todd Woodbridge, who sent Rafter packing in the fourth round at Wimbledon. A stronger women's entry

sees Martina Hingis embark on a journey in which anything less than the grand slam itself will reflect a loss of achievement. Her defeat by Iva Majoli in the French Open final last year blotted an otherwise spotless copybook - although she faced a formidable hurdle in Venus Williams, her opponent in the second round early this morning. Williams, still smarting from her drubbing by Hingis in the US Open final in

September, bristled with intent in advance of this match. Equally compelling was the prospect of Anna Kournikova's second-round clash with Lindsay Davenport, the No 2 seed. Kournikova recovering from a hesitant start to overwhelm Yayuk Basuki, who retired after squandering a 4-1 lead in the opening set to lose it 6-4. Basuki was 3-0 down in the second before withdrawing with a back injury.

RUGBY UNION

Worcester ready to show extent of their ambitions

BY DAVID HANDS, RUGBY CORRESPONDENT

THE postponement of their fourth-round Tetley's Bitter Cup-tie until this evening is likely to hit Moseley harder than their ambitious rivals, Worcester. Bad weather caused both Midland clubs to delay their games with, respectively, Sale and Bristol until tonight and they now find themselves drawing on support from the same catchment area.

However, whereas Worcester are confident that their 4,500-capacity ground at Sixways will be filled, Moseley believe that Sale supporters are unlikely to travel in any numbers. In the way that they would have done for a weekend game.

At Charron, Moseley's Canada flanker, will miss the tie because of a hamstring injury, but in John Liley, once of Leicester, they have a full back who knows all about cup success - and about upsetting Sale. In recent seasons, before his transfer last summer, Liley has made a habit of scoring crucial points for Leicester in their league meetings with the club from the North West. It is Worcester's hope that next season they will join Moseley in the second division of the Allied Dunbar Premiership and, to that extent, their sights are fixed on promotion from the Jewson National League first division. In Richard Le Bas and Mark Linnert, they field a fly half and a prop who moved to them from Moseley, although three of their forwards also have experience as Bristol players.

Mark Crane, Peter Miles and Jim Jenner all played at the Memorial Ground before moving on, while their strong contingent of former Gloucester players will recall derby matches of the past. The successful side has the dubious privilege of a fifth-round tie with Newcastle, the Premiership leaders.

The collapse of Peregrine Investments will not jeopardise the Hong Kong Sevens, the tournament organisers said yesterday. Although the company, sponsoring the tournament for the first time, has gone into liquidation, the Hong Kong Rugby Football Union remains confident that it can match the success of past events. The draw for the tournament, which is to be played on March 27-29, will be made tomorrow, involving 24 international teams.

SPORT IN BRIEF

England off mark in World Cup

CRICKET: It may not have been entirely convincing, but the four-wicket victory achieved by England after bowling New Zealand out for 180 in their opening match of the Under-19 World Cup will lighten the mood considerably after the poor performances on their tour of South Africa.

The batting remains lukewarm and the 23 wickets they bowled yesterday were too many, but they beat a Test-playing nation with something to spare and can look forward to their remaining pool games, against Namibia - who lost to Bangladesh - today and Bangladesh, on Thursday, with enthusiasm.

New Zealand made a promising start after winning the toss, but poor running between the wickets was partly responsible for their below-par total. Giles Haywood and Graeme Swann each made 39 in England's reply.

Baxter's title

SKIING: Alain Baxter, the one British male to have achieved the qualifying standard for the winter Olympic Games in Japan next month, yesterday secured his fifth consecutive national giant slalom title.

On the penultimate day of the British Land national championships in Tignes, France, Baxter, 23, made few errors and was more than one second ahead of the British junior champion, Johnny Moulder-Brown, over the two runs.

Kellogg's have announced a three-year sponsorship deal worth around £1 million with the Britain team for Nagano.

Agassi's move

TENNIS: Andre Agassi, the former No 1, has been ranked in the world's top 100 for the first time in almost five months. Agassi, who reached the semi-finals of the Australian hard-court championships last week, is No 86 on the ATP Tour list.

Kept apart

HOCKEY: Teddington and East Grinstead are in opposite pools for the final stages of the national indoor club championship at Crystal Palace on February 6.

RUGBY LEAGUE

Leading clubs seek their independence

BY CHRISTOPHER IRVINE

THE 12 Super League clubs effectively declared their autonomy from their smaller counterparts yesterday by agreeing to run their affairs under a three-man board of Super League Europe (SLE), the clubs' commercial arm. Maurice Lindsay, the former Rugby Football League (RFL) chief executive, becomes managing director as part of a £500,000, two-year deal agreed by his erstwhile employer. While the RFL holds existing sponsorship and broadcasting agreements, the leading clubs cannot break away from the main body. However, they are determined to promote their competition free of what is seen as interference by some first and second division clubs. It is no secret that they seek a bigger

slice of the original £87 million Super League deal with The News Corporation, parent company of The Times.

Rather than an expensive pay-off, Lindsay's wages at SLE are incorporated in the RFL funding package. At SLE, he joins Colin Myler, the chief executive, and Chris Caisley, the chairman, who agreed with Sir Rodney Walker, his RFL counterpart, to protect the interest of clubs outside the Super League, but is apparently no longer prepared for them to railroad Super League clubs' ambitions at voting level.

"When I talk about repositioning Super League, I don't want to be beholden for my destiny to a club that is putting nothing in and wanting to take everything out," Caisley said.

AMERICAN FOOTBALL: PACKERS ON COURSE TO RETAIN SUPER BOWL TITLE

Green Bay run into purple patch

BY OLIVER HOLT

IT HAS been a long season for the Green Bay Packers. Early on, it seemed as though their Super Bowl triumph in New Orleans last year might have been a one-off. Gradually, though, they hit their stride and on Sunday they beat the San Francisco 49ers to clinch a return to the sport's showpiece event in San Diego in a fortnight. "The Pack is Back," the banners unfurled in Green Bay said last night.

There is still a romance attached to the Green Bay story, still something wonderfully unlikely about a team from a small, windswept community on the icy shores of Lake Michigan making it to one of the biggest money-making extravaganzas in sport. This year, their progression to the Super Bowl was not greeted with quite the same surprise as 12 months ago. Even at the home of the 49ers, they were clear favourites to progress.

It was easy for them, really. Right from the kick-off, from the failure of Steve Young's first drive for San Francisco and the deft way that Brett Favre, the Packers' quarterback, marshalled his offence, it was clear that Green Bay would have the upper hand. At one stage, it looked as though it would turn into a rout. In the end the Packers won the National Football Conference (NFC) championship game by the comfortable margin of 23-10.

They are already hot favourites to beat their opponents in Super Bowl XXXII, the Denver Broncos, who only just ousted the Pittsburgh Steelers in the American Football Conference (AFC) championship game in Pennsylvania and so handed their quarterback, John Elway, a chance to win the game's top prize at the fourth time of asking. It is

more than a decade since an AFC team won the Super Bowl, and even though the Broncos have a better chance than many of those who have gone before, they will still be the underdogs.

The Packers look as though



Favre: deft

they have hit form at just the right time and Favre, in particular, was inspirational against the 49ers. No other quarterback in the National Football League (NFL) can improvise like he can or pass with his power and accuracy, and in the first half on Sunday he broke the 49ers with his assurance and his confidence. Favre, who seems to have established an almost telepathic relationship with his wide receiver, Antonio Freeman, who scored the first touchdown, passed for 222 yards during the match.

In Pittsburgh, most attention centred on Elway's last hurrah. The last time he appeared in a Super Bowl, also in San Diego, eight years ago, the Broncos succumbed 55-10 to the 49ers in one of the heaviest defeats in the history of the game. Elway is 37 now but he has a fine running back in Terrell Davis to share the burden this time.

ICE HOCKEY

Eagles have wings clipped in a storm

BY NORMAN DE MESQUITA

AYR SCOTTISH EAGLES, winners of their previous seven league games, suffered a rare defeat, beaten 5-3 by Manchester Storm, on Sunday and their lead at the top of the Superleague is now just three points. The win lifted Manchester into second place.

It was a close game in the Nymex Centre, with the teams scoring one apiece in the first period and Manchester gaining a slight edge, of 3-2, in the second. They built on that lead with two goals in two minutes early in the final period and all Ayr could offer was a consolation three minutes from the end.

Cardiff Devils moved into third place with a 5-3 win over Nottingham Panthers. They got off to a great start, scoring four times in seven minutes for

a 4-0 lead at the end of the first period. The Panthers scored the only goal of the second period and then surprised the Devils, scoring twice in 42 seconds at the beginning of the third.

That was as close as they got, however, and Ivan Matulik, the Cardiff captain, followed his four-goal performance on Saturday with two more on Sunday, including an empty net marker in the final seconds when Nottingham had removed their goaltender for a sixth forward. In a desperate attempt to tie the game.

In the two Express Cup games played on Sunday, Sheffield Steelers beat Basingstoke Bison 6-3 and Newcastle Cobras ended their losing streak, drawing 4-4 with Bracknell Bees.

OLYMPIC GAMES: QUARTET OF NAGANO WINTER HOPEFULS SET OUT THEIR STALL

Britons search for gold amidst the cold

BY ROB HUGHES

IN NAGANO, the "snow of mercy" has begun to fall, but Olympians pray for more. The season is too mild, there are 23 days to the opening ceremony and Japan's Winter Games workers are laying 1,000 mats in the mountains, trying to hold what precious snow descends. In London, meanwhile, four Britons with genuine medal prospects start their week with a difference. They meet at Waganama Restaurant in the West End of London. They dress up in silk kimonos and they eat their Kellogg's with chopsticks. It is a publicity stunt for the sponsors, but Nicky Gooch and Matt Jasper, the speed skaters, and Douglas Dryburgh

and Ronnie Napier, the curlers, are men with a mission. If gold medals come Great Britain's way from the Japanese Alps, it is likely to be in their disciplines. "Curling is a non-contact sport," Napier observed, "and off the ice we are very sociable because it's all done in our own recreational time. But you will not see a more aggressive curling team at the Olympics than us. I promise you that. We're advised by the British Olympic Association not to state that we are going there to win, but why attend if you are not seeking the accolade of Olympic champion?"

Why have medals if the aim is not to win them?

Simon Clegg, chef de mission of the Britain team (which numbers between 35 and 40) that departs next week, agrees that there is a policy of caution - better that than build up false expectations - but Napier, the country's leading curler, thrives on competition. "I'm in it because I was rubbish at football," he said. "Basically, I couldn't kick my backside. Together with Dougie Dryburgh, I train three or four days a week with stones, work on general fitness another three days and do running in between. Who

wants to do all that to come sixth out of eight at the Olympics?"

From Leven in Fife, just eight miles from St Andrews, a love of this peculiarly Scottish sport was handed down to Napier by his mother, with the competitor's urge, too. At 34 and a career in civil engineering, he shares with RAF Flight Lieutenant Dryburgh a burning intensity, the spur to which is closer to the Olympic spirit than that of many of the millionaires of other sports. When Nagano's flame is lit on February 7, it will stir not only those who are taking part, but also the compulsion to be first. In the ice rink, the weather cannot threaten that.

TODAY'S FIXTURES

- FOOTBALL: Kick-off 7.30 unless stated. * Goals all-told. FA Cup: Third round: Bournemouth v Huddersfield (7.45); Charlton v Reading (7.45); Hereford v Tranmere (7.45); Peterborough v Walsley (7.45); West Bromwich v Stoke (7.45). Third-round replay: Bury v Sheffield Utd (7.45); Ipswich v Bristol Rovers (7.45); Middlesbrough v QPR (7.45); Wrexham v Wrexham. Auto Widener's Shield: Second round: Northern section: Macauliffe v Preston (7.45); Burnley v Notts County (7.45); Wigan v Rochdale (7.45). Southern section: Fulham v Wycombe (7.45); Luton v Brentford (7.45); Nonhampton v Torquay (7.45). Spalding Cup: Quarter-final replay: Morcambe v Gateshead (7.45). First division: Hamilton v Ayr.

- Second division: Clyde v Stranraer. DR MARTENS LEAGUE: Midland division: Huddersley United v Bradford, Dr Martens Cup. Second round: Clevedon v Forest Green. RYMAN LEAGUE: First division: Abingdon Town v Bognor Regis; Wexley v Romford. Second division: Brimley v Tooting and Mitcham, Associate Members Trophy. Third round: Ashley v East Thurrock; Barking v Bedford; Chesham Casuals v Southend; Edgware v Westonstone; Epsom and Ewell v Wexham; East Thurrock v Tottenham; Northwood v Carney Island. UNIBOND LEAGUE: First division: Postlewood v Torquay; Brent Community College v Wokingham; Postlewood; Chesham v Leigh. FA UMBRO TROPHY: First round: Alfreton v Rotherham. First-round replay: Worksop v Barnet (7.45); Leigh Hill v Barnet (7.45); Tisbury v Gosport (7.45); Lark v Gosport (7.45); Chesham v Alderley; Slough v Walling (7.45); Hastings v Bath City; Chesham v Stonegate (7.45); Yeading v York. AVON INSURANCE COMBINATION: First division: Crystal Palace v Charlton (8.0); Millers v Norwich (8.0); Oxford United v Luton (12.0). PORTNITS LEAGUE: Premier division: Green v Torquay (7.0). League Cup: Group three: Notts County v Derby (at the Baseball Ground, 7.0). WARRIOR LEAGUE: WEST LEAGUE: First division: Dept v Chesham; Thamesmead v Whitstable Town.

- UNILEY SUSSEX COUNTY LEAGUE: First division: Burgess Hill v Hailsham. ESSEX SENIOR LEAGUE: League Cup: First round: Stansted v Halden; Sports SCRIPPS DIRECT LEAGUE: Premier division: Sparham South Midlands LEAGUE: O'Brien Builders Premier Cup: First round, first leg: Waltham Abbey v Brook House. First round, second leg: Hillingdon Borough v Milton Keynes; Harrow v Luton; Barking v Barking; Tottenham v Tottenham. Fourth round: London Colney v Greenlands. ENGLISH MIDLAND COMBINATION: Premier division: Brent Community College v G P T (Covey); Chesham v King Heath. BARKS'S BREWERY LEAGUE: Premier division: Spouton S v Trillick. JEWSON EASTERN COUNTIES LEAGUE: Premier division: Sudbury v Watford. JEWSON WEST COUNTY LEAGUE: First division: Totton v Andover. INTERLINK EXPRESS ALLIANCE: West division: Melkior v Kynsley; V. Investment Cup: Third round: Abingdon v Bishops Cleeve; Kings Meads v Bishops Cleeve; St Andrew's v Five Lane Old Boys. NORTH WEST COUNTRY LEAGUE: First division: Macclesfield Town v Kidsgrove. NORTHERN COUNTIES EAST LEAGUE: Premier division: Thackley v Darby. NORTHERN IRLISH LEAGUE: First division: University United v Carrick.

- CALOR COUNTY ANTRIM SHIELD: Semi-final: Dunfermline v Grimsby (at The Oval). LEAGUE OF WALES: Gwent League Cup: Quarter-final, first leg: Bangor v Comry; Barry v Inter Cadeby. PRESS AND JOURNAL HIGHLAND LEAGUE: For Youth v Caernarfon (8.0). THE TIMES FA YOUTH CUP: Third round: First division: Portsmouth v Gillingham. Pool B: North v Spain (7.0); Newport v Rugby Canada (7.0). Pool A: Llanelli v Narberth (7.0). RUGBY UNION: Tetley's Bitter Cup: Fourth round: Macclesfield v Sale (7.30); Worcester v Bristol (7.30). Welsh Challenge Trophy: Pool A: Llanelli v Narberth (7.0). Pool B: North v Spain (7.0); Newport v Rugby Canada (7.0). Tennants Premiership: First division: Boroughmuir v Heriot's FP (7.0). OTHER SPORT: BASKETBALL: Uni-Bell Trophy: Quarter-final, first leg: Newcastle Eagles v Birmingham Bullets (7.30). Sheffield Stars v Leicester Riders (7.30). 100 MICOVEY: Express Cup: Nottingham Panthers v Manchester Storm (7.30).

SWIMMING: COMPETITOR AND COACH IN CUSTOMS FIND SENT HOME IN DISGRACE

Drugs saga detracts from China medal haul

FROM CRAIG LORD IN PERTH

CHINA powered its way to the top of the medal table on the first day of racing in the pool at the world championships...



Chen Yan: victory

Chen, 17, was just short of her own world record pace and a stroke adrift from her teammate, Wu Yanyan...

Shan Ying, another swimmer coached by Zhou, won a bronze medal and there was a first silver medal at the highest level for a Chinese man...

apart, in women's swimming. They were Yanna Klochkova, 15, of Ukraine, and Yasuko Tajima, 16, of Japan...

In addition to complaining that "the weather is too hot and the bus was late", Chen said that the circus surrounding Yuan Yuan and drugs had distracted her...

The sending home in disgrace of Yuan, who will be suspended for four years according to television reports in China yesterday...

Shan Ying, who finished third, still holds the three-fastest 100 metres freestyle time - 54.40sec - finished third in 55.03sec...



Klim raises his arm triumphantly to celebrate a victory that provoked ecstatic celebrations among his own Australian crowd in Perth. Photograph: David Gray

what Shan said? Of course, she was. Thompson's laugh rang out across the room...

Susan Roloff, of Great Britain, finished sixth in the event in 56.03sec, the best placing at world long-course level by a British swimmer since 1986...

Michael Klim, of Australia, as he won his first world title, in the 200 metres freestyle. The world record that he had aimed for eluded the 20-year-old...

China were determined to win men's medals and, in the 100 metres breaststroke, Zeng Qiliang, seventh in the Atlanta Olympics...

Results, page 48

GOLF

Mickelson hopes to swing with the young generation

IT WAS always likely that Phil Mickelson would win the Mercedes Championship, the first event of the year on the U.S. Tour...

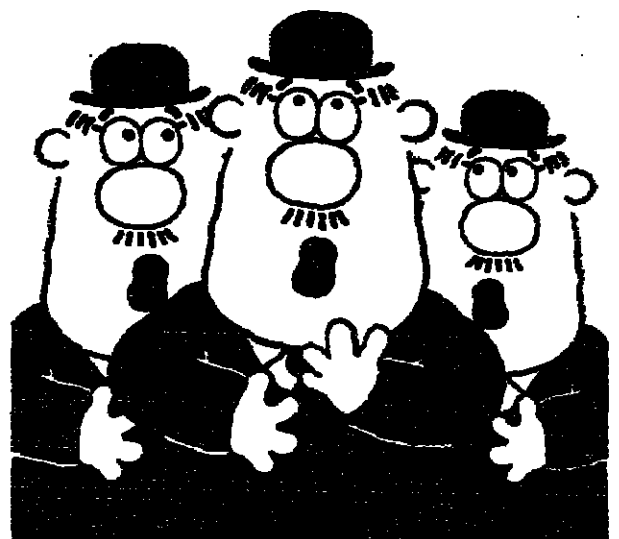
Wood's length made it easily reachable for him and another birdie would have made life tricky for Mickelson. Surprisingly, Woods failed to play it in less than par...

This was the best of all possible starts to the new year for Mickelson, who has had a tendency not to finish off tournaments as he should...

WORD-WATCHING

Answers from page 4. AINU (a) The name of a Caucasoid people in Japan and the former Soviet Union... (b) A plant of the large genus of herbs so called, belonging to the family Compositae...

Don't miss the 31st January deadline or it could cost you more than three tenners



We must receive your completed tax return by 31st January, or you face a £100 penalty. Remember, 31st January means 31st January. If you need help, contact your tax office during office hours...

Revenue Self Assessment - a clearer tax system

TELEVISION CHOICE

Heroism of compassion

Walden on Heroes BBC2, 7.30pm Abraham Lincoln is undisputedly a hero, but wherein lies this heroism? Brian Walden is good at stripping away misconceptions...



The captain and his crew (BBC1, 8.00pm)

The Cruise BBC1, 8.00pm Yet another documentary series delivered in soap opera style, with regular characters and running stories, follows the good ship Galary round the Caribbean on its inaugural cruise...

Crush Channel 4, 9.00pm This is a not an early television showing of that contentious movie but a three-part documentary about car safety...

RADIO CHOICE

Night Waves Radio 3, 10.45pm How will history judge this year? By important events making an impact on whole countries, or by the relatively minor acts of individuals?

RADIO 1

6.30am Kevin Greening and Zoe Ball 9.00 Simon Mayo 12.00 Jo Whitey 12.30pm Newsbeat 2.00 Mark Radcliffe 4.00 Pagan...

RADIO 2

6.00am Sarah Kennedy 7.30 Wake Up to Wogan 9.30 Ken Bruce 11.30 Jimmy Young 1.30pm Debbie Thompson 3.00 Ed Stewart 5.00 Johnnie Walker 7.00 James Galway...

RADIO 5 LIVE

6.00am The Breakfast Programme 8.00 Noddy Campbell 12.00 Midday with Mar 2.00pm Focus on Five 4.00 Nationwide with Ian Payne 7.00 News Extra 7.30 The Tuesday Match...

VIRGIN RADIO

5.00am Jeremy Clark 7.00 The Chris Evans Breakfast Show 12.00 Robbin Banks 1.00pm Nick Abbot 4.00 Mark Forrest 7.00 (FM) Paul Costello (AM) Calum Jones 10.00 Janey Lee Grace 2.00am Richard Porter

TALK RADIO

6.00am Nutsy Young Breakfast Show 9.00 Scott Cheslaim 12.00 Loraine Kelly 2.00pm Tommy Boyd 4.00 Peter Daxley 7.00 Anna Raeburn 9.00 James White 1.00am Ian Collins

RADIO 3

6.00am On Air, with Andrew McGreggor. Includes Bach (Orchestral Suite No 3 in D, BWV1068), Dvořák (Missa Op. 81), Stravinsky (The Firebird), and others...

RADIO 4

5.55am (LW) Shipping Forecast 6.00 News Briefing 6.10 Farming Today 6.28 Prayer for the Day 6.30 Today 8.40 Yesterday in Parliament 8.58 Weather 9.00 News 9.05 Call Robin Lustig...

RADIO 5

5.55am (LW) Shipping Forecast 6.00 News Briefing 6.10 Farming Today 6.28 Prayer for the Day 6.30 Today 8.40 Yesterday in Parliament 8.58 Weather 9.00 News 9.05 Call Robin Lustig...

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makers to put safety on the line was Ford in the 1950s. Its rival, General Motors, demanded that the campaign be dropped...

Inside Story: Searching For Amy BBC1, 9.30pm A documentary from Desmond Wilcox features a mother's long search for the 17-year-old daughter who disappeared in 1974...

RADIO CHOICE

Thirty Minute Theatre: Present Progressive Radio 4, 2.00pm Not another play about expatriates living in France? Yes and no. For one thing these expats are not the usual tired English archetypes...

RADIO 1

6.30am Kevin Greening and Zoe Ball 9.00 Simon Mayo 12.00 Jo Whitey 12.30pm Newsbeat 2.00 Mark Radcliffe 4.00 Pagan...

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FREQUENCY GUIDE: RADIO 1, FM 97.8-99.8, RADIO 2, FM 88.0-90.2, RADIO 3, FM 90.2-92.4, RADIO 4, FM 92.4-94.6, LW 198-199, MW 725-745, RADIO 5, FM 93.0-95.0, RADIO 6, FM 95.0-97.0, RADIO 7, FM 97.0-99.0, RADIO 8, FM 99.0-101.0, RADIO 9, FM 101.0-103.0, RADIO 10, FM 103.0-105.0

Majoring in modern model generalities

When Laura Bailey gave up an academic future, she became a model and ran off with Richard Gere...

Babewatch (ITV) took its cameras to Birmingham's National Exhibition Centre to tall talent-spotters from the Select model agency...

Not that looking like Arthur Mullard should pose any problem. Look at Vernon, 23-year-old former payphone repairman now on Select's books...



Along the way, Vernon and Tessa and Lucy will also discover that fashions change in everything from faces to humour...

Benny Hill Show 43 times. But he never recovered from the rejection in his own back yard. Now, along with other, once-reviled comedians...

Asian comedy sketch show - have side-stepped any debate about whether they are trading in racist jokes by performing sketches that are simply very funny, well-acted, and which mock everyone...

BBC1 TV schedule table with columns for time and program titles like 6.00am Business Breakfast, 7.00am BBC Breakfast News, etc.

BBC2 TV schedule table with columns for time and program titles like 6.35am Wood, Brass and Baboon Bonos, 7.00am See Hear Breakfast News, etc.

HTV TV schedule table with columns for time and program titles like 6.00am GMTV, 6.25am Win, Lose or Draw, etc.

CENTRAL TV schedule table with columns for time and program titles like As HTV West except, 12.55pm-1.25pm A Country Practice, etc.

CHANNEL 4 TV schedule table with columns for time and program titles like 5.55am Sesame Street, 7.00am The Big Breakfast, etc.

CHANNEL 5 TV schedule table with columns for time and program titles like 6.00am 5 News Early, 7.00am Exclusive, etc.

BBC1 TV schedule table with columns for time and program titles like 5.35 Neighbours, 6.00am News, etc.

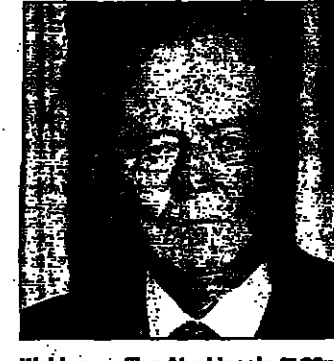
BBC2 TV schedule table with columns for time and program titles like 6.25am Wood, Brass and Baboon Bonos, 7.00am See Hear Breakfast News, etc.

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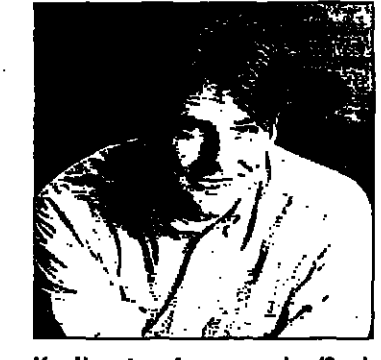
Walden profiles Abe Lincoln (7.30pm)



Alastair Stewart presents (8.30pm)



Van Hage transforms a garden (8pm)



A victim of a car crash (9.00pm)

SKY 1 TV schedule table with columns for time and program titles like 7.00pm Street Sharks, 7.30pm The Simpsons, etc.

SKY SPORTS 1 TV schedule table with columns for time and program titles like 7.00am Sports Centre, 7.30am Football League, etc.

SKY MOVIES GOLD TV schedule table with columns for time and program titles like 4.00pm A Farewell to Arms, 6.00pm The Untouchables, etc.

SKY SPORTS 2 TV schedule table with columns for time and program titles like 7.00am Sports Centre, 7.30am Football League, etc.

SKY MOVIES GOLD TV schedule table with columns for time and program titles like 4.00pm A Farewell to Arms, 6.00pm The Untouchables, etc.

SKY SPORTS 3 TV schedule table with columns for time and program titles like 7.00am Sports Centre, 7.30am Football League, etc.

SKY MOVIES GOLD TV schedule table with columns for time and program titles like 4.00pm A Farewell to Arms, 6.00pm The Untouchables, etc.

SATELLITE AND CABLE

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SKY MOVIES GOLD TV schedule table with columns for time and program titles like 4.00pm A Farewell to Arms, 6.00pm The Untouchables, etc.

SKY SPORTS 3 TV schedule table with columns for time and program titles like 7.00am Sports Centre, 7.30am Football League, etc.

SKY MOVIES GOLD TV schedule table with columns for time and program titles like 4.00pm A Farewell to Arms, 6.00pm The Untouchables, etc.



Monroe and Grant in Monday Business (Sky Movies Gold, 6.30pm)

Table listing various TV channels and their schedules, including SKY 1, SKY SPORTS, SKY MOVIES GOLD, etc.

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TENNIS 49 Rivals pull rank on Henman in Australia

SPORT

TUESDAY JANUARY 13 1998

SWIMMING 50 Chinese success overshadowed by drugs saga



London Scottish player describes 'barbaric' incident in which he lost part of ear

Bath trio cited in biting row

By DAVID HANDS, RUGBY CORRESPONDENT

THREE international rugby players were implicated yesterday in the ear-biting incident that disfigured Bath's cup game with London Scottish on Saturday and which has sullied the sport's reputation in England.

London Scottish officials made clear their disappointment that no individual had confessed to biting Fenn and, privately, their hope that the whole affair will force the game to upgrade its disciplinary procedures.

The three players involved in Bath's front row during the first half of the Teley's Bitter

Ambitious Worcester 49

Cup fourth-round tie at the Recreation Ground were Kevin Yates and Victor Ubogu, both of whom have propped for England, and Federico Méndez, the Argentina hooker.

Fenn himself expressed surprise that no player had come forward. The Australian, 26, who signed for London Scottish last November, described what happened to him in graphic terms at his club's headquarters at Richmond last night.

"It collapsed a little and I fell into what had previously been the tunnel (between the opposing front rows). Immediately I felt a bite on my ear and I could hear the tearing of skin. I have never experienced anything like it. I can't describe what I think. I was shocked. I'm at a loss to know how a

person could do that. That and the gouging of eyes are the worst things people can do."

Fenn has lost part of the lobe of his left ear and his condition will be monitored this week to see whether there has been any infection.

So far, he has required surgery under local anaesthetic to cleanse and stitch the wound but a skin graft may yet be needed and he could be out of the game for anything from between three weeks and three months.

"I still have high ambitions for myself and for London Scottish," Fenn said. "You can train to prevent injuries, build yourself up but when you are on the ground, you can't protect yourself. It was more like street-fighting, it was barbaric. I have a pretty good idea of who did it. I can't imagine being in his shoes."

Richard Yerbury, the club's chief executive, acknowledged the legal ramifications for Bath whose coach, Andy Robinson, and captain, Andy Nicol, were in Bordeaux yesterday where their Heineken Cup final with Brive will be played on January 31. "It's in all our interests that we should resolve this as soon as possible, to show we are a fully professional industry," Yerbury said.

The citing procedure is placed before the Rugby Football Union (RFU) and will be dealt with by their disciplinary officer, Roy Manock, who will convene a hearing at which London Scottish will be required to prove their case and Bath to make their response. That procedure does not, of course, prevent Bath from taking their own action which, in so public an arena and being so high-profile a club, they must surely do.

London Scottish have submitted video footage as part of their accusation, which will be available to Bath, whose chief executive, Tony Swift, said



Yates: tight-head prop



Méndez: hooker



Ubogu: loose-head prop



Fenn may require a skin graft to repair the injury inflicted during the game against Bath

that the evidence he has so far seen was inconclusive. "We have interviewed, and continue to interview, our own players," Swift said in a statement. "The club is fully aware of its responsibilities to all parties in this regard."

"We feel it would be dreadfully irresponsible of us to enter into any public speculation as to the nature of the

incident before we have been able to examine all the available evidence." Both clubs have taken legal advice but there is also a duty owed to the game at large, as well as the contractual consequences to any individual player. The RFU, which is responsible for the organisation of the cup competition, has the power to expel a club from the competi-

tion should it feel the game has been brought into disrepute. "The onus is on London Scottish to prove to the disciplinary committee which player was responsible," Terry Burwell, the director of Twickenham Services, said. An individual found guilty for the first time of a serious offence would normally be suspended for 60

days but stronger action is available to the disciplinary officer, whose verdict is subject to appeal within 14 days. "Any serious assault is a matter of great concern to the RFU," Burwell added. "We would like to see this speedily dealt with, in the interests of the players, the clubs and the image of the game itself."

Venables leaves after reaching settlement with Portsmouth

By RUSSELL KEMPSON

TERRY VENABLES stood down as chairman of Portsmouth yesterday after reaching an agreement to relinquish control of the struggling Nationwide League first division club. It is believed that he received a settlement of about £300,000.

Venables, though still coach of the Australia national side, may now pursue the vacant job as manager of Northern Ireland. He has already held preliminary talks with officials from the Irish Football Association (IFA).

Venables' often turbulent 17-month reign at Fratton Park came to an end after a meeting with Brian Henson, a Portsmouth director, in London. Martin Gregory, the former club owner and managing director, was unable to attend but monitored the deal from Switzerland. Venables had asked for a pay-off of £500,000 last week, while Portsmouth offered £200,000.

After the compromise had been struck, with the Gregory family retaining a majority shareholding, Venables agreed to leave. "The time is right for Mr Venables to go," Gregory said. "I realise I am not the most popular man in Portsmouth, but things were never this bad. We thought we had got one of the world's top coaches, but it hasn't worked out."

Venables, 55, joined Portsmouth in August 1996, initially as director of football and shortly after taking England to the semi-finals of the European championship. He later became Portsmouth chairman, as well as agreeing to coach Australia during their 1998 World Cup qualifying campaign, and he also purchased 51 per cent of the club's shareholding, for a nominal £1, in February last year.

It had been hoped that Venables' arrival and high-profile character would attract substantial investment in the South Coast club. This did not materialise, yet his departure at least opens the way for the consortium led by Vince Wolanin, the American sports stadium developer, and Brian Howe, the rock singer, to negotiate with Gregory about taking over. A meeting has been planned for Saturday in Paris.

Having been linked with the jobs of coaching Nigeria and South Africa, Venables is still in the running to succeed Bryan Hamilton as manager of Northern Ireland. He met with Jim Boyce, the IFA president, at a London hotel on Friday.

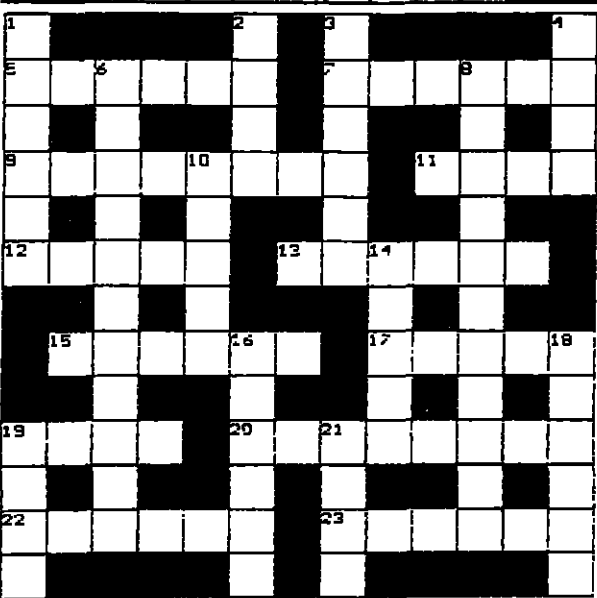


Venables: turbulent

"It was an informal discussion and it went well," Boyce said yesterday. "We did not offer him the job, contrary to reports, so he had nothing to turn down. It annoys me that people have already said he has rejected the job. All we are doing is talking to people of the highest international calibre before compiling a short-list."

"Terry phoned me at home on Saturday morning and thanked me for meeting him. He said he will get back to us for further talks and I'm now waiting for his call. I've told him we're not in any hurry," Ron Atkinson, Bruce Riech and Joe Royle have already turned down the chance to be considered by the IFA.

TIMES TWO CROSSWORD



No 1301

- ACROSS: 5 Ill-advised (6) 7 Irrational fear (6) 9 Shore region: sounds like prosaic (8) 11 Look for (4) 12 Gift voucher: nominal (5) 13 The next day (post.) (6) 15 Misery (6) 17 Defiant: it had Yeomen's (G) (5) (5) 19 Garden water pipe (4) 20 Of the throat (8) 22 River, prov. Blue (6) 23 Pamper (6) DOWN: 1 Item of ammo (6) 2 Scotch brand (4) 3 Greek sun god... (6) 4 ... he in his rays (4) 6 (The same to you) only more so (4,5,2) 8 Capital of Argentina (6,5) 10 Possessor (5) 14 'All's - with the world' (Pippa Passes) (5) 16 Wild parties (6) 18 Water down (6) 19 Animal skin: with I. a game (4) 21 Horse equipment: a sailing course (4)

SOLUTION TO NO 1300 ACROSS: 1 Chaff 4 Wishful 8 Deviation 9 Wag 10 Run 11 Bishoppie 12 By ear 13 Stall 16 Have a ball 18 Cut 20 Air 21 Thermidor 22 Tuesday 23 Neath DOWN: 1 Cedar 2 Advance 3 Flabbergasted 4 Whimsy 5 Song of Solomon 6 Fewer 7 Logical 12 By heart 14 Arcadia 15 Lately 17 Verse 19 Torch

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